

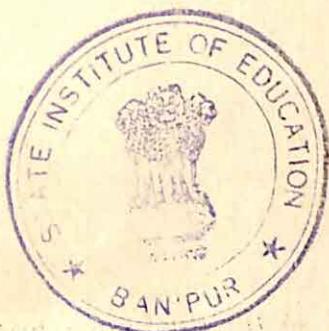
NIKHIL RANJAN ROY

Adult
Education
IN
INDIA
AND
ABROAD

1927 (1907)



ADULT EDUCATION IN INDIA & ABROAD



By

NIKHIL RANJAN ROY, M.A.
Assistant Director of Public Instruction,
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“There is no darkness but ignorance”

—SHAKESPEARE

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It is hardly possible to grasp the significance of the Indian Adult Education Movement without a proper understanding of its origin, and the genius of the people by whom it was moulded to serve the needs of a society at a time, when men lived in small and more or less self-contained communities, where life was largely guided by well-established customs and principles handed down from generation to generation. One of the main sources of sustenance of Indian civilization in the past was our Adult Education Movement (Loka Siksha). "Loka Siksha" irrigated different strata of our social structure without any printing press or any audiovisual equipment. It carried the message of our religious systems and our epics from one corner of the country to the other. Ordinary people imbibed fundamentals of social obligations and codes of conduct through the agencies of "Loka Siksha". India may not have been literate in the modern sense of the term, but the Indian people were by no means uneducated.

Since our independence the scope of the Adult Education Movement has had to be reviewed afresh in the light of our national need with emphasis on scientific and technical education, with a view to gradual industrialisation of the country. The Adult Education Movement has had to assume a wider and more responsible role.

The role of Adult Education in making people conscious of their civic rights and social obligations has been repeatedly stressed in all the successive Educational Plannings in India from Post-War Reconstruction to the subsequent Five-Year Plans.

The Government of West Bengal took the initiative, and prepared their scheme in this behalf, with due regard to the important features of 'Loka Siksha' and the new demands of a society which is being gradually industrialised, and took in hand a programme of Adult Education as early as 1948.

The Scheme was further reinforced and extended with the introduction of the Community Development Programme in 1952 as sponsored by the Government of India.

The author, Mr. Nikhil Ranjan Roy, an erstwhile colleague of mine in the Education Department of the Government of West Bengal, had been actively associated with the formulation as well as implementation of the Social (Adult) Education schemes in West Bengal as the principal State Officer in charge of the operation of the schemes. His activities were not confined to his own field of work in the State; he had had opportunities of studying operations and experiments in other parts of India, and abroad. This publication is an attempt to present a clear and comprehensive picture of Adult Education in its varied aspects since our independence. He has given some comparative accounts of the origin, development and notable features of Adult Education in Denmark, the United Kingdom, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., the countries that are otherwise well-known for their special efforts and experiments in this direction.

I feel, this volume will serve as a useful guide-book of practical value for those who are either academically interested, or actually engaged in promoting Adult Education in this country.

Dated, Burdwan
the 20th February, 1967.

D. M. SEN,
Vice-Chancellor,
University of Burdwan.

*In Memory
of
my revered father
Dr. Tarak Bandhu Roy*

PREFACE

The problem of mass-illiteracy in India is too vast to be overlooked. Though wishfully acknowledged, the problem has not been negotiated with as much will, vigour and sense of priority as it rightfully deserves during the planned phase of India's development. The successive Census Reports for 1951 and 1961 make disquieting revelations about high population-growth and low literacy-percentage. Both are intriguing enough to upset planning, and foil India's social and economic progress. Over-population and illiteracy stand poised against each other in inverse ratio as it were.

Here is an attempt at focussing public attention upon the desperate urgency of mass-literacy in the interest of national progress. Eradication of adult illiteracy is by all means a tough job, but not an impossible one. Detailed references to the methods and organization adopted in other countries that have made remarkable progress in literacy within a comparatively short time, are well worth close and careful study.

'Social Education' has of late been introduced as a subject of study in the Teacher-Education Courses in some of the Indian Universities. The present treatises may prove a useful aid to such studies.

The materials copiously borrowed from different sources, particularly, UNESCO Reports in compiling this book are gratefully acknowledged. The Chapters on "Illiteracy Impedes Economic Growth" and "Social Education in India" are adaptations from reports of the Government of India in the Ministry of Education. The Chapter entitled "The Maharashtra Mohim" is a partial reproduction from a Report of the Government of that State. Extracts from the highly interesting and thought-provoking book "The Adult Education Movement in the United States" by Malcolm S. Knowles have been pieced together in the Chapter—"The Future Horizon".

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ADULT EDUCATION: A CHALLENGE OF OUR TIMES

The future of mankind may in more than one sense, be regarded as keyed to the progress and success of adult education. Such a sweeping observation unless adequately explained, comes in for criticism and controversy. It is necessary to explain how and why adult education in our times promises emancipation of man from the gravest peril that confronts him.

The rapidity and vastness of scientific and technological changes have brought about a transformation of our life-pattern, and weakened all traditional modes and values. Adjustment to these changes is a condition precedent to survival. Resentment and bewilderment are but natural when people have to face up changes which they do not clearly understand. Man today faces the grim possibility of total annihilation. Atomic explosions may result in complete destruction of all that human genius and talent has set up during the centuries of evolution.

Two things, namely, total destruction of all that human civilization stands for, and the more exciting prospect of the conquest of space have become technological possibilities for the present generation. On the one hand the world stands perilously poised on the brink of extinction, and on the other it stands on the threshold of an unknown and uncharted universe of incomprehensible dimensions. The choice now lies between the two. In this context the consensus is unanimous that education should be extended to all men and women to

enable them to understand the implications of these changes, and to play their role intelligently in this exciting drama.

The present-day scientific developments synchronize with other changes of far-reaching consequence. New industrial methods and quick means of communication are affecting life in all parts of the world. Industrialization and urbanization are following in the wake of these changes. Parts of the world, which twenty years ago had been rural and agricultural are fast growing into towns and urbanized areas. The whole social structure is consequently undergoing revolutionary changes and transformation. New modes, new relations and new values are replacing the old ones. Nor are the changes which are moulding and fashioning the very pattern of our life and living only technological and material. Population all over the world and particularly in the so-called underdeveloped areas is increasing by giant strides. During the last two decades a number of nation-states, for example, in Africa, have emerged, and for the last few years the bigger world powers are standing ranged against each other in uneasy peace. The world today stands divided in two rival camps.

Survive or Perish

In the face of all this the crucial problem of humanity today is to survive. But is it the old question of survival of the fittest? It is not just the same. The time-honoured theory needs amendment in the sense that it is no longer the question as to who will survive whom. Today the problem seems to be that either we survive together or we perish together. Survival implies that the countries and the nations of the world must learn to live together in peace. Peaceful co-existence is not only a political slogan. It is the practical formula, the operative word. Mutual understanding and accommodation, sympathy and cooperation are the qualities most needed today, and these qualities by and large are fostered by knowledge, and destroyed by ignorance. In the alarming realities of the world-situation, it is no overstatement at all that the future of mankind hinges on education. Adult education today has assumed a new meaning,

and a new significance. The old connotation of Adult Education, that is, belated instruction in 3 R's for the illiterate and uneducated adults, has yielded place to a new concept of life-long education for all people without exception. Our whole life provides time and opportunities for education and improvement. Life is a constant and dynamic process of adjustment to the changing world around us for which education and training are ever needed.

Education is the know-how for living as well as surviving. If man now learns to survive by avoiding the impending catastrophe, which is his own doing, he will have before him opportunities for material and social development and well-being such as had never been available before in history.

The Impelling Need

Adult education is, therefore, an impelling need, a need so imperative and over-powering that all men and women must be helped to acquire the skill and knowledge that would enable them to properly fit into the new pattern of community life into which they are fast moving. Adult education is an indispensable necessity for the people of the developing countries. Man must be adequately equipped to reap the rich harvest that modern life offers him. Materially and morally, socially and politically, he must be fully competent to take intelligent interest in the affairs of the world. Education is no longer the close preserve of the chosen few. It is one of man's fundamental rights.

For the developed and progressive countries too, adult education is an unavoidable necessity. A healthy society is composed of men and women of character, and not human automatons. Too much emphasis on vocational needs and technical skills unbalances education and hinders the proper development of human character and personality. Lack of social objectives is one of the strongest indictments of technological, vocational and hedonistic education. Man is always more precious than his possessions. A man is a many-sided being, and many are his needs. He is a human being first—a mechanic or technician afterwards. All his

needs—social, spiritual, aesthetic and material—must be squarely met in a comprehensive adult education programme.

India perhaps is one of those rare places where opposites stand juxtaposed in sharp contrast—tradition facing modernism, stark ignorance facing the highest of wisdom, and plenitude facing dire poverty. India is known to be the biggest democratic state with an electorate of 260 million people enjoying adult franchise. Such wide civic rights and duties now vested in the people have certainly a general educative influence. People are getting acquainted with and becoming aware of their civic responsibilities. The manner in which the general elections are held, and the way the voters conduct themselves, point to the educational impact of democracy. But still the story is only half-told. The full significance of adult franchise and all that it stands for, cannot be properly understood and grasped merely by exercising franchise once in five years. Education on a universal scale alone can prepare and train the mass-mind for this purpose. Democracy and education are complementary. Adult franchise without adult education sounds paradoxical, and education without adult franchise is explosive. Adult education in the present Indian situation is, therefore, an impelling necessity. This alone would help the people attain full nationhood. India's future lies in the education of her people.

Briefly speaking, the concept of adult education basically implies:

- (i) That every man and woman should be helped to acquire functional literacy as the first step to greater education.
- (ii) He and she should also be aided to acquire vocational, technical and professional competence.
- (iii) That human and personal development of individuals should be duly fostered.

We may accept the definition given by UNESCO, and have a precise statement of the objectives of adult education.

"It is to help men and women to live fuller and richer lives in adjustment to their environment, to develop the best elements in their culture, and to achieve the social and economic progress which will enable them to take their rightful place in the modern world, and to live together in peace".

A Sovereign Remedy

Having accepted the axiom that there can be no democracy without literacy or fundamental education, it deserves consideration as to how national literacy can be attained as well as maintained. The system of Primary or Elementary Education really lays the foundation of national literacy. Adult education supplements and consolidates the task of Elementary Education. In the more progressive countries like England and the United States Elementary Education, which is universal, obligatory and compulsory, and is extended till the age of 15 to 18 is by itself self-sufficient. Elementary Education in such countries does not only produce national literacy but consolidates it. But Primary Education in our country today usually means four years' schooling upto the age of 10 or 11. The content and standard of Primary Education cannot obviously compare with that of Elementary Education in those countries. It has been statistically proved that of the out-turn of our 4-year Primary Schools at least 30 p.c. relapse into illiteracy for lack of facilities for post-literacy education. Even the higher standard of Elementary Education in the European and American countries is reported to have failed to guarantee cent per cent functional literacy, and that is why an extensive net-work of adult education organizations are set up, and operate in those countries. Adult Education steps in to seal the gaps left by the regular school system. Adult education ensures permanence of national literacy, and facilitates further education.

Vis-a-Vis Democracy

India's teeming millions need to be educated and brought upto the level of modern scientific, technological and social development. Conferment of the right of adult franchise emphasises the importance of mass-education. The

adult voter, 'our master' so to say, should be helped to understand his social and civic obligations, as well as the rights implied in adult franchise. He is not only a voter by virtue of his age. He is also eligible to be voted for to represent his people. Education alone enables a man to earn his rights and to discharge his obligations.

The child of today will grow up as adults tomorrow. Every man is more or less the torch-bearer of the tradition of his elders. The child of today will be largely influenced by what their elders do or think, and grow up as such. To plan and execute a scheme for children's education without providing simultaneously for adult education would leave things half-done. By adult education alone it is not possible to solve the problem of mass-illiteracy. Nor is our Primary Education comprehensive and far-reaching enough. The need for obligatory and universal Primary Education, as well as comprehensive adult education is equally urgent.

THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Adult Education has to play a significant two-fold role in a developing country. No closer integration of the indigenous peoples is possible without permeation of education amongst them. Secondly, no motivated desire for social change, and higher standard, as well as improved quality of living can be generated without their awareness of cultural independence which emanates from widespread education alone.

Though the University degree or diploma is still the symbol of social status as well as hall-mark of fitness for respectable citizenship, training for employment seems to be gradually becoming the main purpose of education today. Functional literacy and vocational training constitute the core of public education in modern times. Special emphasis upon the vocational and employability aspect of education seems to be the order of the day. The aims, objects and content of Adult Education in India today should, therefore, conform to the pattern of her fast changing economy. The kind of society in which the people live today, and are likely to live in the future should determine the scope and character of Adult Education. Socialization and industrialization are the two most notable features of the present phase of transition through which India is passing. The types of Adult Education the country needs in this context are:

Standard of Functional Literacy

- (i) Functional literacy for the out-of-school adult popu-

lation. No hard and fast standard of functional literacy can, however, be set forth for all times. The standard is bound to vary according to the socio-economic progress of the people. But keeping in view the present state of social and economic development of the country, attainment in one's mother tongue equivalent to that attainable as a result at least four years of formal schooling may be regarded as our immediate minimum target.

Economy-motivated Adult Education

(ii) In order that the man-of-the-world adult may be properly motivated and made interested, the programme of literacy should in all possible cases, be linked with suitable economic activities. Adult literacy classes with work programmes, and workshops and establishments running adult literacy classes are envisaged. Varied types of literacy programme for different social and vocational adult-groups such as women, tribals, cultivators, mill-hands, miners, hawkers, etc. are considered necessary.

(iii) Special post-literacy education for the adult neo-literates, and further education facilities for the school-leaving people are equally needed. Education is not at all complete when a man or a woman leaves school. As a continuing process it goes on throughout life. This continuing process embraces all aspects of life including personal and human development of man through aesthetic and intellectual education.

Finale to the General Educational Process

As a necessary complement to formal and institutional education, adult education should be adopted as a complementary part of the programme of Higher and Technical Education. The better the type of adult education, the more can it arouse interest in continuing the educational process. Thus the various types of adult education right from basic literacy to the upper rungs of the educational escalator—academic, scientific, vocational and technical—should provide a complete and comprehensive coverage.

Liquidation of Adult Illiteracy

The adult literacy programme should be treated as a matter of priority, and taken up by the Anchal/Village Panchayats, Block Administration, Cooperative Societies, Labour Welfare Centres, Municipalities, Corporations and similar other bodies as an obligatory part of their duty.

The High and Higher Secondary Schools, the Colleges, Polytechnics, Engineering Colleges and Institutions for Vocational Training etc. should in all possible cases, adopt one or more adult literacy classes within their respective spheres of influence.

Short of compulsion all large-scale employers should be required to organize and conduct adult literacy classes for the benefit of their workers.

Thumb-impression, as valid endorsement should be abolished as a rule.

Ability to read and write with understanding should be made the minimum qualification for employment under Government and in public offices and establishments.

Government Leadership

The Government should, for obvious reasons, play the most important role in any crash programme. The main responsibility for planning, financing, organizing and supervising the programme, that is, leadership should invariably rest with the Government. The voluntary organizations should be encouraged and financially assisted in carrying out the programme. Large-scale employers should be required, if necessary, by suitable legislative measures to undertake the work. Political Parties, Trade Unions, and professional organizations should also fall in line. The Government's support and assistance for such activities should not be withheld on political or party grounds.

Adult Schools and Evening Colleges may provide educational facilities upto the level desired by those who had had their educational career prematurely cut short. Instruction imparted in these institutions should be of an adequate

standard, and should also be duly recognized for the purpose of employment. The demand for such institutions in cities and industrial centres is considerable.

Big industrial and commercial concerns themselves should provide further education facilities for the benefit of their employees, and also encourage them to avail themselves of such facilities wherever available. Technical and vocational schools and colleges should organize 'Sandwich Courses' for the working people.

Net-work of Libraries

An extensive net-work of public libraries comprising State, District, Sub-divisional, Town, Block, Panchayat and Village Libraries to lend support to the Adult Education Programme is essentially necessary.

Planned book-circulation service with the help of modern transports should be conducted by these libraries.

Properly equipped mobile libraries should operate in remote and scattered areas.

The libraries of the High and Higher Secondary Schools and Colleges should maintain separate sections to cater for the public.

Public Library Service should be properly planned and organized in the State capitals, cities and urban areas.

There should be at least one museum in each district town.

Establishment of local museums should be encouraged.

High/Higher Schools and Colleges should be assisted in setting up museums of their own.

Role of Higher Educational Institutions

Besides adopting adult education centres, and opening public sections in their libraries, and museums, etc., as already stated, the Secondary Schools, Colleges and Universities should organize and conduct regular extension programmes with the voluntary service of their teachers and students.

Such programmes may include work-camps, exhibitions, popular lectures and demonstrations, etc. Each University should have a full-fledged Extension Department manned by specialists to implement the Adult Education Programme. The Universities in particular, may conduct researches on Adult Education and its ancillary problems.

The Press

The press may contribute to the Adult Education Programme substantially by bringing out periodicals and publications suitable for popular consumption at the neo-literate level.

Audio-visual aids such as the film, the radio and the television should be increasingly used as a regular part of the school and college programmes.

Greater emphasis should be laid on the production of educational films, films on health, family-planning and popular science, etc.

Correlation between Adult Literacy and Per Capita Income (From:—“Literacy at Mid-Century”, UNESCO)

Literacy percentage around 1950	Per capita income around 1950				
	\$300 or more		Between \$300 and 150	Below \$150	
	1	2	3	4	5
80% or more	Argentina	New Zealand	Japan		
	Australia	Norway			
	Belgium	Spain			
	Canada	Sweden			
	Denmark	Switzerland			
	Finland	U.K.			
	France	U.S.A.			
	Netherlands				
50 to 79%	Puerto Rico		Ceylon		
	Venezuela		Chile		
			Costa Rica		
			Ecuador		
			Greece		
			Panama		
			Paraguay		

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(Contd. from page 11)

1	2	3	4	5
		Philippines		
		Portugal		
		Thailand		
		Yugoslavia		
Below 49%			Bolivia	
			Brazil	
			Dominican Republic	
			Egypt	
			El Salvador	
			Gouatemala	
			Haiti	
			Honduras	
			India	
			Malaya	
			Nicaragua	
			Turkey	

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ADULT EDUCATION

The expression "Social Education" is of comparatively recent origin and currency. Its nearest synonym with which we are generally acquainted is Adult Education. Adult Education, as we are accustomed to think of, stands for adult literacy. Adult education conveys a sense of compensation—compensation for the lack of educational facilities in earlihood. But at no time in history and in no country of the world prior to the advent of the modern age of science and technology, do we ever know of the existence of any system of universal education embracing the bulk of the populace. Formerly education with all its high standard of perfection remained confined to the privileged few. The common man seldom came under its coverage.

Towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, the facet of human civilization, particularly in the West, underwent a swift and remarkable transformation. Scientific discoveries and technological advancement not only ushered in the Industrial Revolution, but also brought about far-reaching changes in the pattern of social and community life. Growth and development of democratic institutions, introduction of adult franchise, equality of social rights, etc., were some of the direct results of the impact of Science on Society. So long as life remained village-centred, and so long as the community subsisted mainly on agriculture and other allied vocations with scant contact with the world outside, the need for universal education as a medium of wider communication could hardly be felt.

Effects of Industrial Revolution

The need for universal education in general and adult

workers' education in particular, came to be increasingly appreciated with the opening of the age of industry and technology. Large-scale employment of uneducated or rather unlettered workers in the mills, workshops, factories and industrial and commercial establishments in the Western countries during the first half of the nineteenth century, posed certain important problems. Workers' education was a felt need not only for safeguarding the workers' own rights and interests, but also for ensuring industrial efficiency, and stepping up production. The so-called Mechanics' Institutes, and later on the well-known W.E.A. (Workers' Educational Association) were the pioneers and precursors of the widespread adult education movement in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. It was required of the workers, artisans and mechanics employed in the industries to acquire some minimum knowledge of the how and why of the new machine tools. They were required to have some working knowledge of the new Factory Acts and Labour Laws in order that they might safeguard their own interests and rights. The Trade Union Movement organised adult education courses for the benefit of its members. Also, with the invention of locomotives and vast improvement of the means of communication closer and more frequent contacts between the people of different parts of the country or even of different regions became possible as well as necessary through trade and commerce, travels and cultural exchanges. This also stimulated the growth of adult education.

Impact of Adult Franchise

Democracy and adult franchise are aptly called the *raison d'etre* of universal adult education. William Ewart Gladstone, the famous British Prime Minister of the nineteenth century, in one of his election campaigns had raised the now oft-quoted slogan: "Educate your Masters". Lenin, the father of Soviet Russia put it in a different language. "An illiterate people can have no socialism", said he. The significance of such sayings becomes clear when we consider that adult franchise not only means the right to vote, but also the right to be elected. We in India today

enjoy adult franchise only in its half-sense. People vote. But the majority just mechanically put the ballot-paper into the ballot-box, and are considered to have discharged their most important political duty as citizens of a sovereign republic. But how many of them are aware of their right to be voted for, or are capable of discharging their responsibilities if called upon to serve as members of the country's legislatures? The answer is obvious. Education upto a minimum standard in one manner or another of the young and old, of men and women is indispensably necessary for the proper understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Democracy and its attendant political rights and obligations, therefore, presuppose education for all. Adult franchise without adult education is a paradox, a contradiction in terms.

Economy of Plenty

Science today has established its sway over the forces of nature, and harnessed many of them to the service of man. Man has enriched himself immensely by exploiting the resources that Nature has to offer. The world today as compared with that a couple of centuries ago is materially as well as intellectually far richer than before. From an economy of scarcity the world as a whole has emerged into an economy of plenty. The concept of universal Human Rights is not to be confined to political equality alone. Economic, social and cultural equality is envisaged with the same emphasis. But unfortunately, the condition of the common man is still far from the ideal visualised. He is economically starved and culturally famished. His life is poor, barren and unsatisfying. He is denied the fruits of education and is culturally too ill-equipped to enjoy and appreciate the beauty and blessings of human civilisation. Education for all is the guarantee for cultural justice and equality.

From Adult Education to Social Education

As has been stated adult education is often equated with adult literacy. For the purpose of census enumeration in

India ability to write a simple letter or message and to read the same is considered to be a person's qualification for being counted as literate. But the value of such nominal literacy is highly dubious for all practical purposes. The ability to just scribble one's name, and to stammer through a school primer does not take one far enough. The doubtful signature of a border-line literate is much less reliable than his thumb-impression, which cannot be copied.

A man may acquire literacy as the result of three or four months' efforts, but unless he is adequately educated and enlightened, he remains susceptible to the propaganda by every advertising quack and is likely to be swayed away by any political stunt.

A Broader Concept

Therefore, literacy though the first essential step towards greater education is not its be-all-and-end-all. Even admitting the primary importance of literacy, the need for a more embracing and comprehensive concept is all too obvious. Social education has a wider and more comprehensive scope. As defined and outlined by the late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Social Education encompasses a five-point programme:—

- (i) Promotion of adult literacy.
- (ii) Improvement of economic condition.
- (iii) Betterment of health and sanitation.
- (iv) Education for democratic citizenship.
- (v) Proper use of leisure through cultural, recreational and aesthetic activities.

Since the commencement of the Community Projects in 1952, Social Education has been included as an important item of the Project Programme. It constitutes the educational basis of the programme. Its application over wide areas in an intensive manner calls for harder thinking about its meaning, content, methodology, etc. Social education vis-a-vis the Community Development Project is now inter-

preted broadly as a programme aiming at inducing the rural population to receive new ideas and techniques, for example, in agriculture, cottage industry, health and sanitation and so on. It is also interpreted as the means for promoting better living and creating the psychology for working together for community well-being, and accepting social changes, which would transcend and ultimately obliterate traditional social prejudices and inhibitions. The Social Education programme is intended to influence the life of the people, their understanding, outlook and attitude towards the building up of a new and better life. The Social Education Organizers and workers on whom rests the brunt are expected to inspire popular enthusiasm for and participation in the execution of the national development plan.

A concrete programme of work has been formulated, and efforts are being made to carry it out. Ignorant and under-developed people cannot understand the meaning of political freedom unless it is presented in a tangible form through activities directly related to their social and economic interests. The programme in brief is:—

(i) **Measure for imparting knowledge.** Literacy classes, group-discussions, library service, production and supply of reading materials, rural radio forum and audio-visual demonstration.

(ii) **Community Organisation.** Youth clubs (**Bratidal**), Mahila Samitis, Children's groups. The process of coming together and undertaking co-operative projects produce the desirable effect of creating a feeling of belonging together, without which social and community relations in rural areas will continue to be compartmentalized according to caste, sect and sex, and thus hamper communal unity and social cohesion.

(iii) **Cultural and Recreational Programme.** Its object is to impart cultural and emotional education, to develop aptitude for art and aesthetics, to provide joy and entertainment, and lastly to wean away the villager from the common vices like gossiping, gambling, drinking and other social evils.

NAMES AND NOMENCLATURES

The problem of educating the adults, particularly, the working adults, arose out of the necessity for employing trained personnel to man the new machines of mass-production. Scientific inventions and advancement of technology in the Western countries during the nineteenth century radically changed the social and economic fabric of life. There was a big shift from the age-old rural and agricultural pattern to industrialized and urban form of life. People of the old agrarian social order subsisted mainly on agriculture and its allied vocations they lived the old-fashioned, traditional slow-moving life within the limited confines of the rural community. They might have been cultured, and yet afford to go without formal education, i.e., acquisition of the skill of reading and writing. Literacy or for that matter fundamental education for one and all has been recognized and accepted as a basic human right rather recently. It is now looked upon as an unavoidable and integral part of the modern way of life—whether democratic or non-democratic. Whatever may be the political ideology or form of Government—monarchical, parliamentary, presidential, republican, communistic or even dictatorial and totalitarian—any ruling power worth the name is bound to put the highest premium upon universal education, and make necessary provision for the same. There can be no democracy or socialism without literacy. Literacy is, therefore, a synonym for modern civilization. From this naturally arises the outstanding importance of adult education, i.e., education of the people outside the school-going age.

Different Nomenclatures

Some of the different names and nomenclatures with which we are familiar are:—

- (1) Adult Education.
- (2) Mass Education.
- (3) Community Education.
- (4) Folk Education.
- (5) People's Educational Programme.
- (6) Cultural Mission.
- (7) Social Education.
- (8) Basic Education.

Adult Education

This is the most common, and universally used form of expression. By implication it means imparting education to those who at their educable age could not or did not go in for formal schooling. It carries a sense of compensation for the denial of opportunity in earlihood. Originally, its scope did not stretch further than learning the 3 R's, that is, acquiring ability of reading and writing equivalent to what is usually known as census literacy. In India census literacy was formerly equated with ability to read and write a simple post-card letter.

With the progress of scientific and technological knowledge, establishment of representative forms of Government, rapid improvement in modes and means of communication and other social changes, the meaning of adult education has widened immensely, and now embraces almost everything that stands for education. Adult education today is regarded as life-long education for every normal living human being. It is not merely belated education for the illiterate adults. In a wider import it is a lifelong process of learning by every individual, and its content, therefore, is as wide and varied as human knowledge. The expression 'Adult Education' is in vogue in Great Britain and the English-speaking countries. In England a comprehensive programme of adult

education is carried on by the W.E.A., and the Extramural Departments of the Universities. A variety of subjects, namely, Art, Literature, History, Economics, Social Studies, Science, Music, Dance, Crafts etc., are included in the Adult Education Curriculum. Illiteracy does not present any serious problem in those countries. The aim of 'Adult Education' is to broaden the horizon of the people, and afford opportunities for further cultivation.

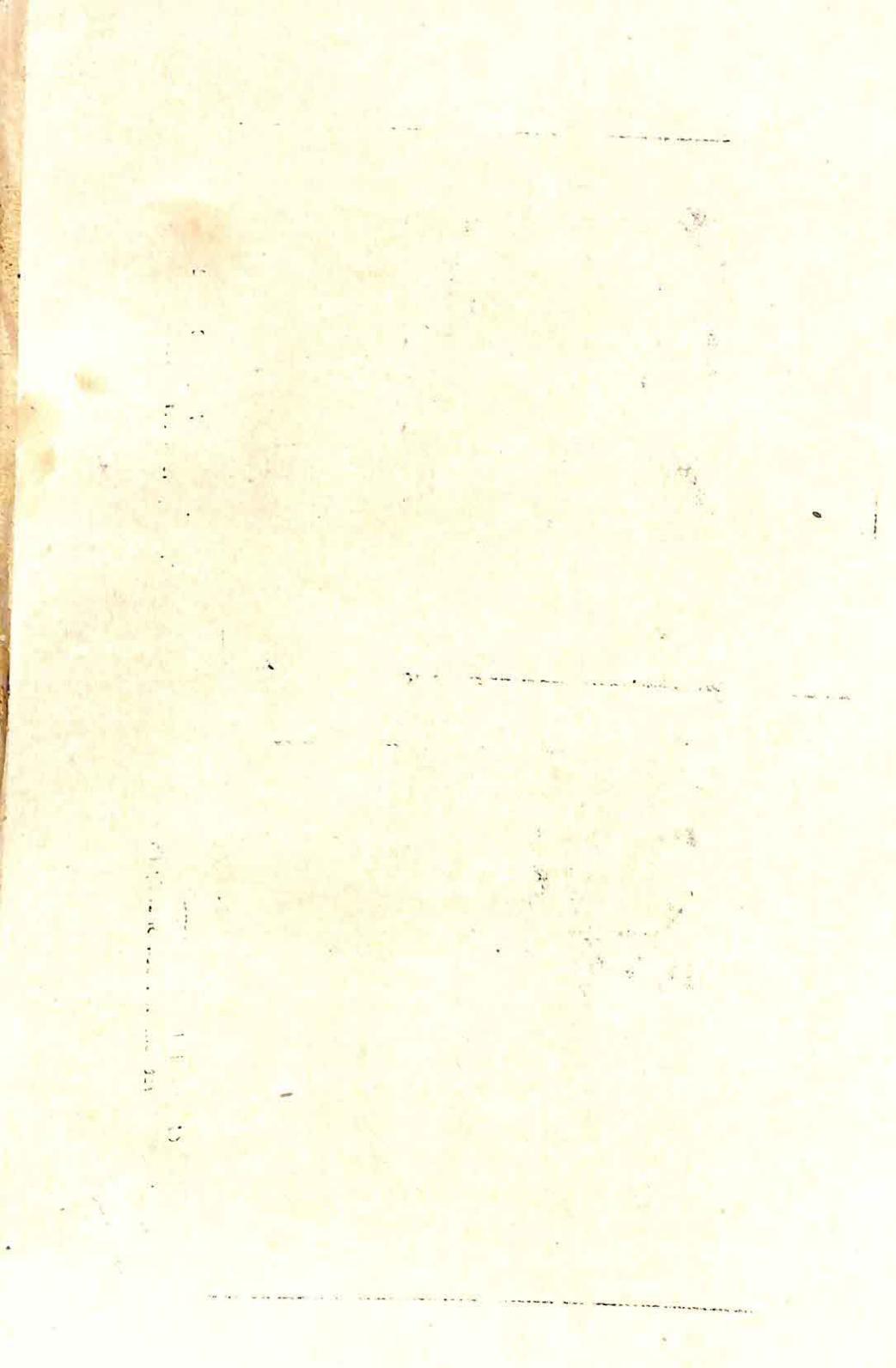
Mass Education

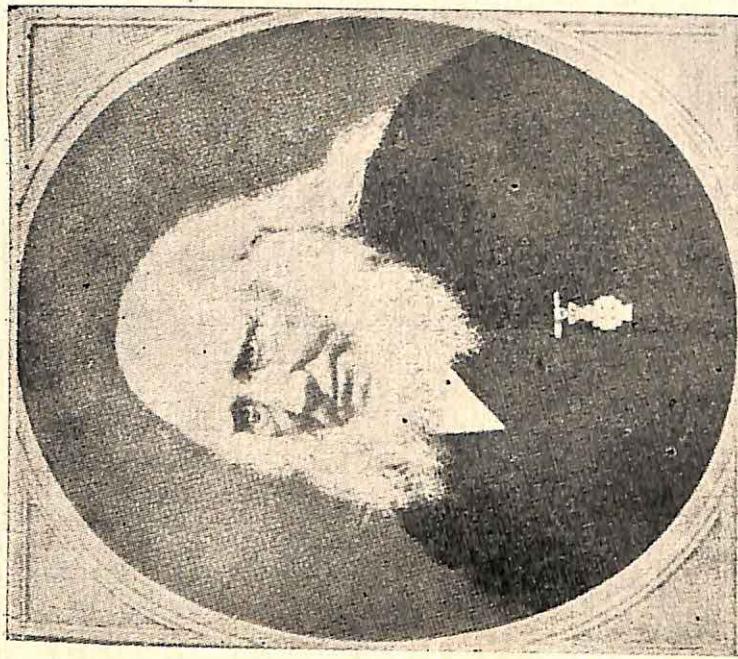
This term really stands for the education of the people as a whole. A movement was launched in the early 'Twenties of the present century in China with the object of eradicating mass-illiteracy. The leader of this movement Dr. James Wen conducted this movement mainly with the voluntary help and service of college and University students during their long vacations. Quite a vivid account of this popular movement has been recorded in Pearl Buck's book "Tell the People". The most interesting feature of this mass movement was the enthusiasm and spirit of service aroused amongst the students, who constituted the spearhead of the campaign. Considerable field achievement was attributed to this movement at a time, but it is not known how far or whether this is being pursued during the Red regime in China.

Community Education

A community school is an institution that renders educational service to the people of the entire community, that is, not only to the children of the school-age but to the other members of the community dwelling in a particular area. The Community school aims at:

- (1) making the school an ideal democratic community,
- (2) relating what is taught in the school to what actually goes on in the community,
- (3) bringing people from the community into the school-premises for purposeful activities,





N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783—1872)
Father of the Folk High School Movement



Christen Kold (1816—1870)
Founder of the first Folk High School at Ryslinge

- (4) taking the school children out into the community for playing their proper role in its activities,
- (5) and getting the students, teachers and members of the community together to solve the problems of the community.

In a Community school the children and their parents and elders simultaneously use the tools of learning to advantage in effecting improvement at home and in the community

Such experiments are being successfully carried out in some South American countries and elsewhere.

Folk Schools

Folk Schools are characteristic Danish institutions associated with the names of Bishop Gruntdvig, and Christen Kold, a cobbler. These institutions served the historical necessity of counteracting the aggressive influence of German **Kultur**, which threatened to superimpose itself on Danish culture and institutions in the wake of German occupation of the southern parts of Denmark in the Sixties of the last century.

The Folk High schools in Denmark and other Scandinavian countries are a class by themselves. These institutions provide courses mainly in cultural subjects—Art, Literature, Philosophy, Religion, History, Music etc., and also in subjects especially suitable for women. The object of these courses is to elevate people culturally. The success of this movement was marked by:

- (i) Preservation of national and cultural integrity in the face of an aggressive alien culture,
- (ii) Economic development of the country through co-operative undertakings in the field of agriculture, farming, dairy etc.

People's Educational Programme

In Russia in 1917 the percentage of literacy was barely 24. To-day the figure is almost as high as that in any progressive Western country. The progress of Soviet Russia in

8.10.93



Science and Technology in particular, now about 50 years *after the Revolution*, may be regarded as an unmistakable index to her achievement in the field of education.

In 1919 an anti-illiteracy Commission was appointed under a decree issued by Lenin. It was made imperative for every educated man and woman to educate the uneducated. Vigorous, determined and elaborate efforts were made to wipe out illiteracy and to spread education amongst *the people*.

Cultural Missions of Mexico

In Mexico travelling parties comprising teachers, engineers, actors, demonstrators, singers and lecturers are appointed to go round the countryside, and carry out a cultural programme for the enlightenment of the people.

Social Education

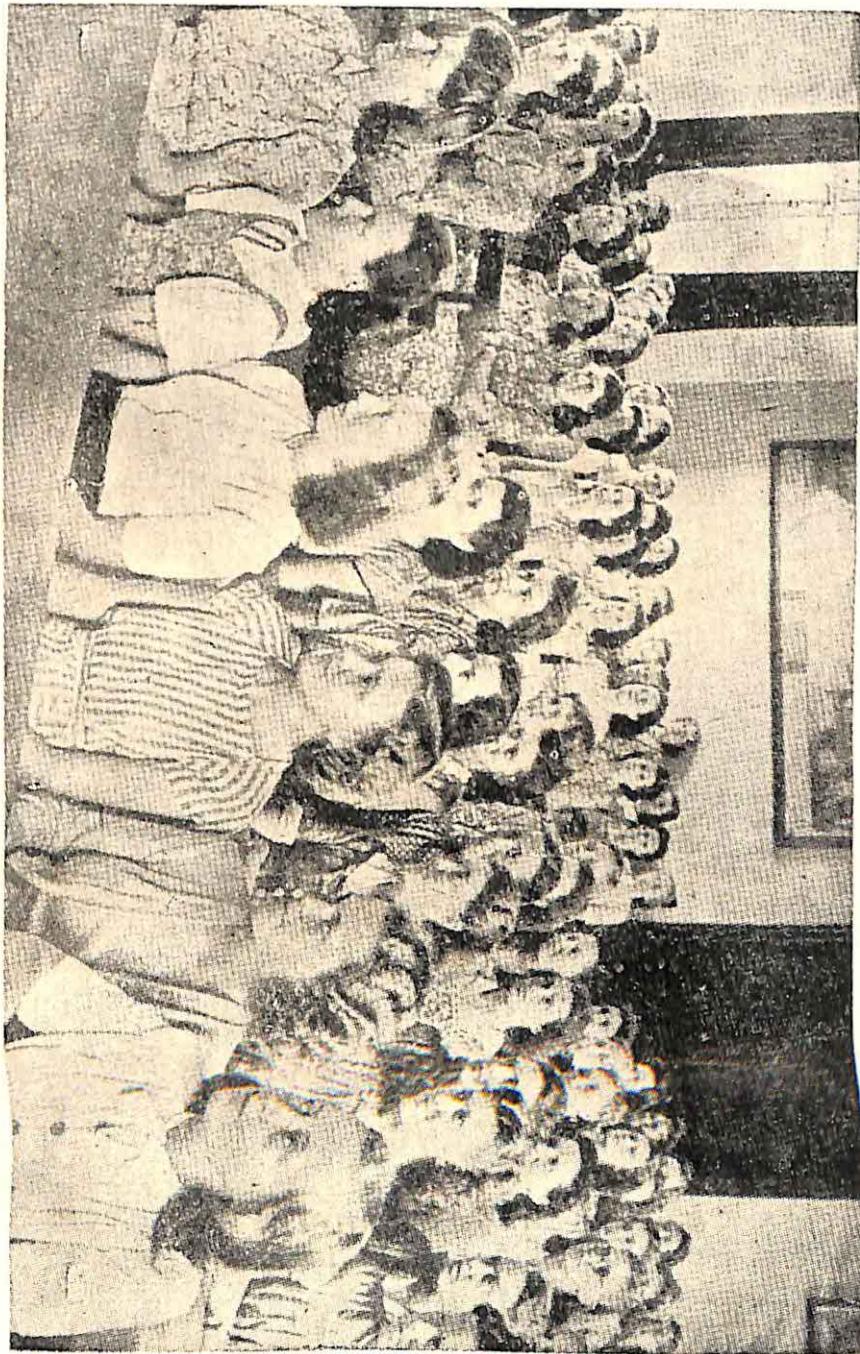
This is an Indian coinage, the authorship of which may be attributed to the late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of independent India. It stands for a five-point programme, namely,

- (a) Removal of illiteracy,
- (b) Education for health,
- (c) Education for citizenship,
- (d) Education for economic improvement,
- (e) Emotional and aesthetic education through informal and audio-visual media of mass-communication.

Some Good and Bad Points

The literacy aspect of the programme, which is by far the most urgent, is often overlooked under the camouflage of catchy expressions. The most immediate issue of literacy is often ignored and side-tracked by the comparatively easier and more spectacular aspects of the programme. The question of adult illiteracy is not treated with the seriousness it deserves.

Young Danish women of the three-months' summer course



The standard of national literacy varies with the people's economic and industrial and social progress. The social and material impact of scientific and technological advancement necessitates higher and higher literacy standard. The number of years of compulsory school attendance is a good index to the standard of literacy in an educationally forward society. The proportion of the population of very low literacy ability is small. The standard of literacy in such societies is, therefore, set at a level much higher than simple alphabet literacy.

The term "functional literacy" has acquired widespread currency. The range between "simple" and "functional" literacy is a wide one indeed—from bare ability to read a word and reproduce it in writing to ability to communicate with other persons by means of a written message or even to understand, appreciate and produce literature.

The United Nations Population Commission defined literacy as ability both to read and to write a simple message in any language.

This definition though suitable for census purposes fails to meet the needs of comprehensive educational surveys. The census enumerator's schedule usually contains one or more questions: Can you read and write? Or upto what standard did you read? The criterion of census literacy is, therefore, nothing but minimum, and cannot be tested and verified by a detailed examination.

The above-cited U.N. definition has since been reviewed by UNESCO. The following definitions of literacy and semi-literacy were laid down by a Committee of Experts on Standardization of Educational Statistics in 1951:—

"A person is considered literate, who can both read with understanding and write a short statement on his everyday life."

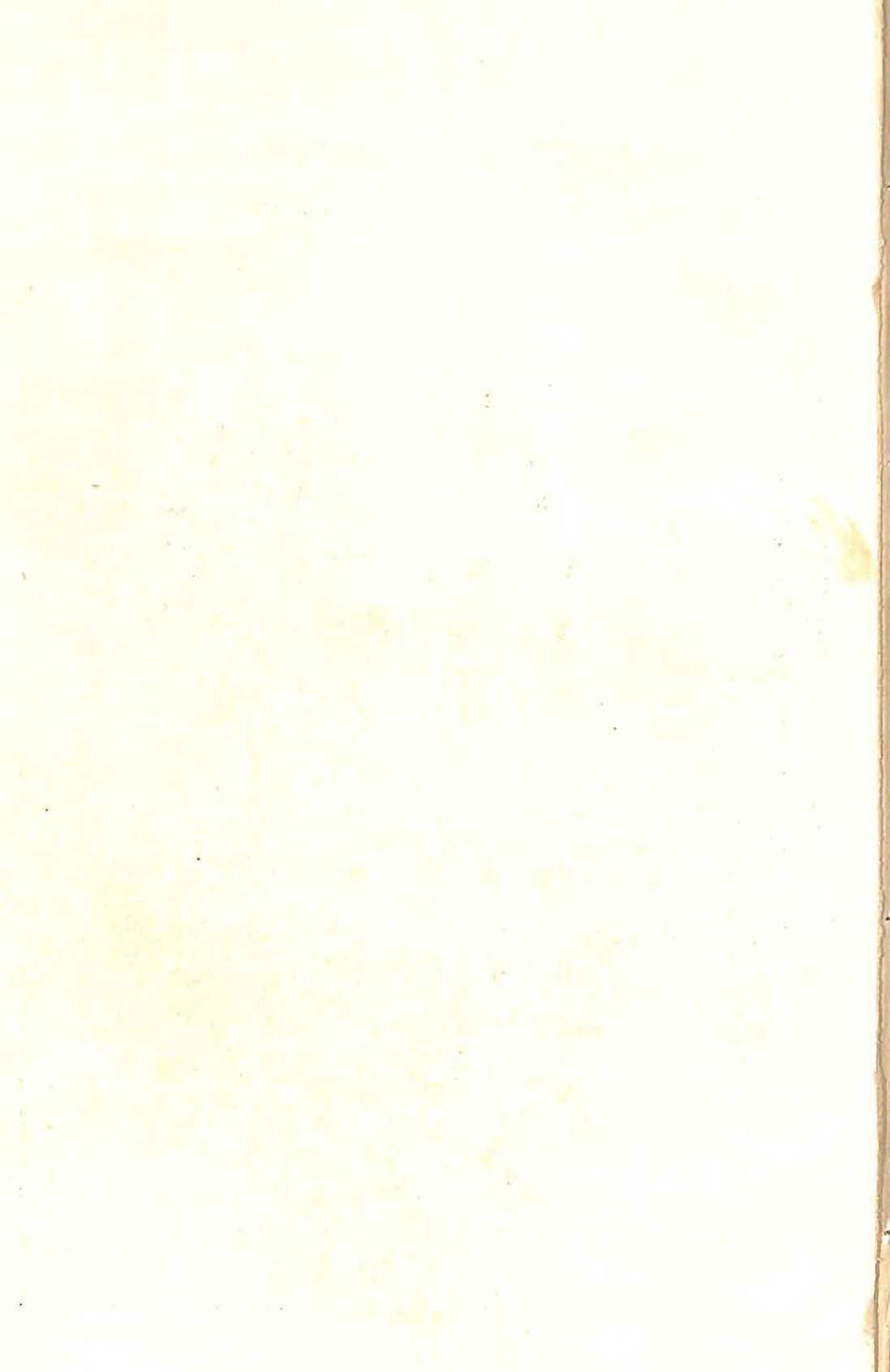
"A person is considered semi-literate, who can read with understanding but not write a simple statement on his everyday life."

The same report recommends the following principal methods for verifying literacy:—

- (i) By complete enumeration in a population census, either by asking a direct question on literacy; or ascertaining literacy status by an indirect question on the number of successfully completed years of schooling.
- (ii) By sampling surveys, either as in a complete enumeration, with a direct or indirect question; or using a standardized test of literacy.
- (iii) By estimation based on either a school census; or regular school statistics.

UNESCO has liberalised the concept of literacy and its objectives have been stated in the following comprehensive terms:—

“Literacy is to help men and women to live fuller and richer lives in adjustment to the changing environment, to develop the best elements in their culture, and to achieve social and economic progress, which will enable them to take their place in the modern world, and to live together in peace.”



Basic Education

Basic Education is yet another expression of Indian origin, of which the author was no less a person than Mahatma Gandhi. Basic Education seeks to reform the existing traditional type of book-centred education. Its main features are:

- (i) Education through the medium of mother tongue.
- (ii) Education to be closely related to the social and physical environment of the student.
- (iii) Development of creative aptitude of the learner through some useful craft or manual work. Acquisition of knowledge to be correlated to some basic craft.
- (iv) The school should be a productive unit, and pay its way.

ILLITERACY IMPEDES ECONOMIC GROWTH

India is a country wedded to democracy. Education is more urgently necessary for a democratic society than a totalitarian one, and yet dictatorships are found more serious about obliterating mass-illiteracy, but people in India feel rather complacent about it.

In a democratic society one has not only to be patient with those who differ from you, but has to try to understand their viewpoint. Why do some of our people refuse to take the problem of illiteracy seriously?

Their arguments may be summed up as follows:

The cost of removing illiteracy is so heavy that the country simply cannot afford it. Take the cost in money. Even a modest sum of Rs. 10 as the cost of making a person literate, would involve a colossal cost of making over 200 million illiterates literate. Better put this money in a steel mill or a dam. Making a person literate is to put "ideas" into his head. With the country up to the neck in poverty, so many more literates will mean so many more frustrated individuals. This will lead only to social unrest.

Arguments Against

After all, what is literacy worth? In the first place, how many people use their literacy? Perhaps not more than 10%, and of the vast majority of those who use it, what do they gain? Literacy does not make them a more cohesive force in the groups to which they belong. Education makes a man more assertive and aggressive. Literacy by itself does not lead to economic growth.

The workers and farmers do not need literacy in order to raise their productivity. There is no doubt, they need new skills and perhaps a new outlook and new attitudes too. But it is possible to give them these new skills and attitudes more cheaply through audio-visual aids and the other media of mass communication. It is much more costly to maintain a literate man than an illiterate man. The latter is content with much less. By and large these are the main arguments against a national anti-illiteracy programme.

Economics of Literacy

The positive correlation between literacy and national income or per capita income, regardless of the material resources of a country, is by now a well-known fact and need not be repeated, except to say that the correlation is not a new phenomenon of the 19th or the 20th centuries. It has manifested itself throughout history. The river valley civilizations—Egypt, Sumer, and Indus-Valley—were the first to put humanity on the road to economic development. It is here in these places that literacy first made its appearance. In the Fourth-century Athens literacy pervaded in a much greater measure than in old Egypt, and the citizens of Athens were far more prosperous than the subjects of the Pharaoh. Athens was not only the most prosperous of all the Greek City States, it was also the most literate and the most democratic. At the pre-dawn and dawn of the Christian era, the city of Alexandria enjoyed a prosperity perhaps not less than that of Athens in its own days and “it has been estimated that 60% of men and 40% of women of the middle class in Alexandria wrote Greek; to them must be added a considerable number of Alexandrians who wrote only Egyptian.” The advance of modern Europe and the United States in literacy and national wealth, one alongside the other, is a well-known story. Indeed, the example of Europe is very instructive in this respect. Portugal and Spain, and Portugal more than Spain, are behind the other European countries in literacy, they are also behind them in wealth. And, most interestingly even in one and the same country, namely, Italy the north is richer and the more literate than the south.

DEFINITIONS OF LITERACY

In the dictionary sense literacy means acquaintance with the alphabet and ability to read and write. A person is considered literate if he can read handwritten, type-written or printed matter, and also put it down in writing. "Analphabetism" is a newly coined word to denote this simple literacy. Starting from this modicum the scope of literacy may extend over an unlimited field of achievement. For statistical purposes, especially in connection with census operations, ability to read and to write a simple letter used to be previously regarded as the minimum standard of literacy. The standard has since been raised. The Indian Census for 1961 sets forth a somewhat higher standard, namely, the passing of a public examination after completion of a two-year school course. This is equivalent to the Class II standard of a Primary School or the now defunct Lower Primary Examination. Census literacy is an important means of assessing the educational progress of a particular community, or of the country as a whole, and is as such immensely valuable from the national point of view. The progress of literacy in India during the last six decades as shown in the following table carries its own conclusion. Making due allowances for the rather rapid growth of population (roughly @ ten million a year particularly after Independence and Partition) the position is that literacy in India rose from 6.2 to 24 per cent only during the period 1901-1961.

During the decade 1951-61 India's population increased from 357 to 438 million—an increase of 21.5%. Despite the

Census Year	Percentage of literacy		
	Total	Man	Women
1901	6.2	11.5	1.7
1911	7.0	12.6	1.1
1921	8.2	14.2	1.8
1931	9.1	15.3	2.4
1941	14.6	Not available	
1951	16.6	24.9	7.9
1961	24.0	33.9	12.8

increase in the percentage of literacy from 16.6 in 1951 to 24.0 in 1961, the fact remains that the number of illiterate persons in India now is 36 million more than in 1951. According to a rough and ready estimate there will be about 200 million illiterate persons of the age-group 14-45 in India by 1966. This indicates the quantitative magnitude of the problem of mass-illiteracy in this country. The national planners envisage a massive programme during the Fourth and subsequent Plans, whereby it will be possible to reduce if not eradicate illiteracy within a foreseeable period of 20/25 years.

The rate of illiteracy in any country is generally inversely related to the extension of school education. If all the school-age children are at school, the rate of illiteracy comes down to the irreducible minimum, say, 1 or 2%. If school age enrolment is 90%, adult illiteracy rate will be as low as 10/15% and vice-versa. Subject to the various natural snags that usually accompany such compilations of national statistics, the extent of illiteracy prevalent in the different continental regions of the world according to UNESCO estimates is indicated by the following figures:—

Age group 15 and over		Illiteracy percentage
World total	...	40
Africa	...	77
North America	...	11
South America	...	40
Asia	...	60
Europe (incl. U.S.S.R)	...	7
Oceania	...	12

England Fell Back

The positive correlation of literacy and national wealth, then, is a well-known fact. It is well-known that Great Britain stole a march in the 19th century over the other European countries and the United States. But in the middle of that century Germany and the United States not only overtook her, but surpassed her. While Germany and the United States of America had put very high stakes on gearing their educational systems in top form, England during that period lagged behind in Primary Education for the people, even if its entres of high learning for the selected few were first-class ones. While in 1850 the United Kingdom had an illiteracy rate of 50%, Germany was well on the way to nearly solving the problem. As regards the United States of America, the idea of universal common school was accepted and largely put into effect during the first half of the 19th century. The economic 'take off' period in the United States was from 1843 to 1860. This period was preceded by the decisive educational developments of about 1820 to 1840 as described above.

The Danish Lesson

In the middle of the 19th century Denmark was "just an agricultural" country only lately free from the feudal yoke, when she was faced by ruin from competition from the United States, Russia, and other countries. Denmark met the challenge and reorganized her agriculture on co-operative lines. With her mediocre soil and indifferent climate that small country succeeded in producing about half of the bacon, 30% of the butter and 20% of the eggs that enter the world market.

How was this miracle achieved? It was done through co-operation and application of scientific knowledge. Both these things could not have happened if the Danish peasantry were illiterate. We know how our own illiterate peasantry is impervious to the benefits of co-operation. But the Danish farmer was made fit for it by education. As early as 1814, a royal decree had made schooling compulsory for

all children, sanctioned the establishment of state schools in all localities and even stipulated penalty for parents who did not send their children to school. This was done when Denmark was yet decades away from her "take off".

The Japanese Example

The case of Japan is well-known. By the middle of the 19th century she was rudely awakened by the West out of her complacent isolation. The first thing that her wise rulers did was to build up a system of general and technical education with widespread literacy as its firm basis. This was fundamental to Japan's industrial advancement. No other enterprise of the state paid more handsome dividends to the nation. Japan did not begin with steel mills. She laid a solid foundation for economic development in her nation-wide system of general education.

The Russian Achievement

The leaders of the Russian revolution did precisely the same thing when they came to power. Indeed, the Russian example is one of the most inspiring in the annals of education, and even men with rocklike conviction in democracy have uttered full-throated praise for the Russian example. In 1926 Russia had an illiteracy rate of 43.3%. Within a decade the back of the monster of illiteracy was broken. It is easy to say, as often enough it is said that the Russians could do it because of their ruthless system, and that no democratic country can and dare put its people under such sacrifice and suffering as the communist system can. The truth is that the Russians never put any third-degree methods into operation to make the people literate. Those who have read the history of the literacy movement in Russia know that it was a mass movement which evoked boundless mass enthusiasm. Millions came forward to get educated, and the Russian rulers, with enthusiastic support from all sections of the population, far from allowing considerations of 'finance' to curb this enthusiasm, positively and decisively led the masses to victory over illiteracy.

To say that Germany and Japan were vanquished in

World War II, is only to describe their condition at the end of the war euphemistically. Their economy was completely crushed and blown to smithereens by the bombers, and, yet, within a decade these countries were not only on their feet again, but in the matter of economic resurrection they evoked the unstinted admiration of the whole world and the envy of many. No people without universal literacy could ever have succeeded in performing this miracle.

Literacy and Productivity

Horace Mann very rightly said that education is convertible to houses and lands, as it is into power and virtue. It is not difficult to see why literacy should be so great a factor in economic development. In the first place, literacy is a basic requirement for obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for economic development.

Studies are lacking on investigations into the relationship of literacy and productivity. Yet, whatever evidence is there, goes to show that a literate farmer or a literate worker is, other things being equal, economically more productive than his illiterate brother.

This applies to women too. Literacy is as good an investment on women as it is on men. We are rightly concerned over our population explosion, and without being alarmists we can say that, from the point of view of our economic development at least, our fertility is our despair. We do not give full credit to our intelligence if we believe that illiterate women can take to "Family Planning" in such numbers as to make a significant reduction in our fertility rate.

There are men, loud and aggressive on behalf of democracy, because to them it is hardly distinguishable from their own prosperity. For these people education or universal literacy can wait. But in every country there are men of conviction for whom democracy expresses the human spirit in a way no totalitarian system ever can. With rare unanimity these men say that universal literacy can provide a positive foundation for democracy.

The United States took the lead in establishing schools for children. This was not accomplished without opposition. The protagonists of universal literacy won over the opposition, significantly, only after 1828, the year in which universal suffrage was introduced. The shrewd men of affairs in the United States saw the direct connection between universal literacy and political stability.

In England, too, though the humanitarians were agitating for a long time for universal primary education for the people, the movement for total abolition of illiteracy gained momentum only after 1839, the year of the Chartist Riots. Here the opposition against universal schooling was stiffer than in the United States, and the argument that finally won the day for universal literacy was that it was the best "means of teaching the working classes to govern and repress their passions."

Concentration of Wealth

One characteristic feature of a democratic society is the absence of too much concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. In that sense, too, Indian society is not so democratic as the stability of the Indian political institutions would lead us to believe. Here, also, the villain of the piece is illiteracy. All over the world illiteracy and maldistribution of wealth go together. The United Nation's preliminary report on the world's social statistics cites the example of four countries—Ceylon, El Salvador, Puerto Rico and Italy, where, during 1950, 1/3rd or more of the total income was earned by the richest tenth of the population. In five other countries—Canada, Denmark, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America—the upper tenth accounted for less than 1/3rd of the total income. It may be noted that the countries in the first group have higher illiteracy rates than those in the second group. In the United Kingdom and the United States, for example, the present trend is towards lesser concentration of income in the upper brackets, as compared with the earlier period.

—(Adapted from the report of a seminar at the National Fundamental Education Centre, New Delhi)

ADULT PSYCHOLOGY, MOTIVATION AND METHODS

The method of teaching adults and adolescents is substantially different from the method of child-teaching. An adult usually is a person with experience, interests and more or less fixed notions. He may have certain set ideas and impressions of his own, and may not readily accept those of others. It is a delicate and difficult job to induce or persuade an adult to accept and assimilate new thoughts and information. Prejudices die hard. An adult educator's task in the beginning is a patient and painstaking crusade against apathies and inhibitions. It may not be possible to overcome these obstacles by drastic and quick methods. Outright denunciation of anything held dear and fast may produce undesirable reactions. People in some areas may be averse to vaccination out of fear, backwardness and lack of education. It may be so, because none so far had cared to explain to them the efficacy of vaccination. An effective approach to the situation will surely be an indirect approach through practical demonstrations accompanied with plain expositions. Audio-visual aids may be made to play a significant role in such cases.

Adult Sensitivity

The natural sensitivities and complexes of a man of the world have to be duly recognized and respected. The adults are sensitive about their short comings, and are likely to be cut to the quick by any show of slight or lack of sympathy or consideration. The adult's interest in learning has not

only to be created but also sustained by encouragement and judicious words of praise. Nagging and insistence on perfection are to be avoided. A successful adult educator is one who not only knows a good deal about his subject, but also knows that he does not know everything. Both individual and group psychology, operate powerfully in adult education. An adult, above all, is to be treated with respect. His individual entity, and his dignity as head of the family, as a member of the society or profession are to be given proper recognition. Even in casual address, polite and courteous forms are to be scrupulously used. The teacher must be a kind and understanding judge of human nature.

Motivation

Motivation is a very commonly used word in the context of adult education. It means creation of interest in learning. But most adults would often fail to express their feelings, and tell what their real needs may be, in order that these 'needs' may be made the focus of motivation. Before trying to motivate the adult learner the adult educator should ask himself about his own objective. His own motivation is equally important. What is the purpose that he is striving to serve? Is his a paid job? Is it a part of his vocation? Or, is he a volunteer working in a sheer altruistic spirit, and is prepared to continue to persist with this labour of love? These are some of the self-searching questions that the adult educator should try to find answers for. In these answers lies the cue for his success or otherwise. If he is not trained, he should get himself trained. Training may not work miracles, but will surely help him in tackling the problems with skill and confidence. A dilettante is likely to fail in spite of his ebullience. The rational and psychologically approved methods for child-teaching will take far too long a time with the adults. Shorter and more straightforward approaches with due regard for the adult's needs and interests will help them master the elements of reading, writing and counting in a much shorter time.

The physical, social and economic handicaps, if any, of the adult learner need to be observed with care and circum-

spection. Appropriate remedies are to be prescribed or administered according as the situation demands. An adult suffering from short eyesight should be advised or, if necessary, helped in getting it cured.

It does not, however, follow from all this that an adult should, for that matter, be pampered or unduly favoured with concessions. Consideration and sympathetic understanding are not to be mistaken for indiscriminate indulgence. Adult women are generally shy. Their shyness is sometimes mistaken for apathy. This has to be overcome by careful and sympathetic dealings. Injured susceptibilities though trifling may prove a positive hindrance. There is no shock-treatment in adult education. It is a story of patience, perseverance and skill.

Friendly Approach

A friendly approach is the best approach in adult education. Equality of treatment irrespective of status will make the adult learner feel at ease. His initial hesitancy should be broken by cordial dealings. The general atmosphere in an adult education centre should be pleasant and friendly. The adult learner will then come out of the shell of shyness, and speak out his mind. It is one of the primary duties of the adult educator to ascertain the individual or group interests of his clientele. Economic needs are, in most cases, now-a-days the needs of the majority. Social and cultural needs may also provide a powerful impetus to learning. Desire for higher income and better status motivates the working class people. An agriculturist or a mechanic may be interested in acquiring the know-how of his trade. Sport-lovers, cinema-goers and political fans are eager customers of news. Short-time campaigns, permanent or quasi-permanent centres and individual contacts are the major methods adopted in conducting an adult education movement.

Campaign Method

Anti-illiteracy campaigns are conducted through public meetings and propaganda. Large numbers of short-term

camps are organized over widespread areas, and professionally heterogeneous groups of people are brought together to be made literate. Enthusiasm is whipped up through intensive propaganda. The camps organized carnival-fashion usually last for a month or so. The quantum of achievement in real terms as a result of short-term camp instruction does not, and cannot go beyond acquaintance with the alphabet or just ability to read and write. Such camps are intended to bring about quick results on a mass scale. But the gravest shortcoming of such quick result is that the degree of literacy attained is weak and intangible, and unless vigorously pursued with extensive post-literacy activities, such mass-campaigns prove more or less fruitless in the long run.

The College and University students often use their long vacations in organizing short-term literacy camps.

Centre Method

Adult literacy classes or centres are set up areawise as in villages or wards in cities, towns and large industrial establishments. It is possible to get together socially or vocationally homogeneous groups in these centres. The centres are run on permanent or quasi-permanent basis as in the Community Development Blocks with a view to meeting the needs of a particular area. After a time when illiteracy in that area has been reduced to naught or negligible residue the centre is shifted to another place. The classes are held for longer periods, say, 4 to 5 months. Though the results are neither quick nor spectacular, tangible functional literacy is attainable by this method. The need for follow-up work through library-service is, of course, essential to help the neo-literates in consolidating their initial achievement.

Individual Contact

An educated individual takes upon himself the task of educating his illiterate neighbour. 'Each one teach one' is an excellent slogan with an appeal of its own. The proposition sounds economical. If every educated person under-

takes to make at least ten more persons literate, illiteracy in this country will soon cease to be a problem, and that on an almost no-cost basis. Though theoretically ideal, this method is far too inadequate to solve a mass problem. The assumption that every educated person will willingly take up this work, or that everyone is fit for such work, suffers from excess of optimism.

Adult education like other aspects of education is also a long-term investment. Its success depends upon sound and sensible planning, organizational efficiency and adequate finance.

Considering the magnitude of the problem, some people in India are still inclined to rule it out as impossible of achievement. Fond hopes are entertained in other quarters that mass-illiteracy may be wiped out through sheer unpaid voluntary service. This is tantamount to over-looking the obvious. As in the case of other constructive projects, adequate funds must be provided to meet the challenge of illiteracy.

READING METHODS IN ADULT-TEACHING

Literacy is the first stepping stone to formal education. It is an indispensable instrument with the help of which the adult can educate himself. The skill of reading and writing enables him to achieve what he really wants. There is no substitute for reading in achieving the various kinds of personal development and social progress. The printed materials present a far larger range of information, and describe more ways of achieving specific purposes in life than anything else. Moreover, the reader can read and reread according to his convenience, and reflect upon the materials read. The word in print contains and expresses more ideas than any other medium of mass-communication. An adult may be considered functionally literate if he has acquired the understanding and skill of reading and writing equivalent to what a child may acquire after completing four years of elementary schooling. It has been found that most adults can attain this standard after taking 120 well-planned lessons each of two hours' duration.

Successive Stages

Four successive stages may be generally set forth for planning and executing an adult literacy programme. In the beginning some preparatory work should be undertaken to find out to what extent the adult lacks in interest, and to what extent he lacks in confidence. Other limitations such as his poor language ability, his natural inability to work with others or to adjust himself to the class-room situation, his financial worries and even physical handicaps such as

poor eye-sight and defective hearing etc. have also to be taken into account, and remedial measures should be thought out and adopted according as the situation warrants.

In the second stage the class is organized with a definite objective, namely, imparting training in reading and writing. The initial objective of this stage is fulfilled when the adult learner acquires the ability of reading within a vocabulary range of 300 most frequently used words with proper understanding. Such attainment may be possible as a result of 24 well-planned lessons. The learner is able to read with ease and understanding at the end of this stage.

The aim of activities in the third stage is to facilitate rapid growth of reading ability. The target is to enable the learner to read with increased understanding and fluency any material within the vocabulary range of 2000 select words.

The major aim of stage IV is to provide further guidance to ensure continuity of and maturity in reading. Silent reading with understanding and appreciation or, in other words, reflective reading is the ultimate aim.

Methodology

The methods used in teaching people how to read are known by different names. According to the psychological processes involved in reading, some methods are called 'synthetic' and some 'analytic'. There are other methods called 'alphabetic', 'phonetic', 'word' and 'sentence' methods. These, in particular, refer to language-units used in teaching or learning the art of reading. By and large all methods of teaching 'Reading' can be broadly classified either as synthetic or analytic. In the synthetic group of methods the lesson starts with the word-unit or word-element, i.e., the letters of the alphabet. This method may be subject to certain variations. In languages which are phonetic, the letters—usually the vowels first—are grouped according to sound-similarity. In Sanskrit and Bengali these groups are called vargas. Letter-recognition is followed by combination of the letters into words and larger language units. Because

of this proceeding from the component parts to the whole, the method has been given the name 'Synthetic'.

The Synthetic Method

Another variation of the synthetic method is to start with sound-units or syllables. Syllables may be made of one or more letters as in English. The Alphabet or Syllable method is perhaps the oldest and most orthodox method adopted from the beginning of language learning. Its advocates affirm that this is the most direct and economic method since the learner is required to recognize the letters or syllables straightforward. There is the further advantage of reading and writing going together. This is very logical and practical in adult-teaching. The wordly-wise adult has his own working vocabulary though limited. The words, phrases and sentences to be introduced in the lessons may not necessarily be all unfamiliar to the adult. His main handicap is his inability to recognize the letters and to write them out. Once he can overcome this initial difficulty, learning to read and to write may turn out an exciting and interesting experience. Maturity of thinking and practical experience of men and things stand an average adult in good stead in taking these lessons. Despite the criticism that the synthetic method through alphabet or syllable approach has no connection with the content and meaning, the man-of-the-world adult may find it comparatively time-saving and practical. One of the main objections to these methods is that attention is applied almost exclusively to the letter-sounds and letter-forms without caring for meaningful words and expressions, which after all constitute the basic purpose of language-learning. Cut off from the context of words and expressions, the letters are but meaningless symbols, sounds that signify nothing. Critics call the alphabet and syllable methods un-psychological and unrealistic.

The Analytic Method

The other method, namely, the Analytic Method proceeds in the reverse order. The lesson starts either with

words or sentences or paragraphs or stories. A word is split up into its component syllables or letters.

CAT = C/A/T

RAN = R/A/N

AFTER = AF/TER = A/F/T/E/R

A sentence is split into words, and words into syllables or letters. A paragraph may be similarly analysed into sentences, and sentences into words and so on. Because of the process involving analysis of the whole into its component parts, this method is commonly called the Analytic Method. The advocates of this method commend it specially on psychological grounds. People first observe and comprehend a thing as a whole, and then proceed to analyse it into parts. This is also the natural method of learning, and therefore, psychologically sound. People think in terms of complete ideas and express themselves in words or groups of words and sentences. When stories or sentences are presented in the lesson, the learner is helped in acquiring the habit of thoughtful reading. He is brought face to face with a situation of reality, and as he goes on a sense of achievement grows apace. These methods, also called 'Global' methods, have had the approval of the UNESCO authorities, and are now widely used in the European countries. These are also adopted in the English-medium schools in this country. In spite of the strong psychological reasons at its back the method proves more readily successful in the case of pupils coming from a comparatively enlightened social or family environment. A child, whose parents are educated, whose elder brother or sister is at school, and in whose household there is no dearth of books, periodicals and other printed materials, which acquaint him quite early with the visual images of things in print, is likely to benefit by this method more quickly. This helps him grasp the whole expressions and sentences comparatively quickly. But similar response may not be forthcoming so readily from adults belonging to the educationally backward communities without any educational background and environment. The method is also criticized on the ground that the average teacher does not

pay sufficient attention to word-recognition with the result that the learner may go on parrot-pattering without being able to recognize the letters individually and independently. The learner fails to become an accurate and self-reliant reader. It is not too seldom that a child learner goes on reading paragraphs or verses without being able to decipher the letters.

Analytic-Synthetic Method

In view of the comparative advantages and disadvantages of these two different methods some are in favour of striking a compromise by adopting the best features out of each method, and evolve a middle course which they call 'analytic-synthetic' method. The word, for example, is the smallest idea-unit. The first lesson or lessons may be designed with certain known and familiar words. These are called key-words. The words are to be introduced with the help of appropriate illustrations. As association between the word and its visual representation in the picture is thus established. This stabilizes impression and helps comprehension. The word is then analysed into its components of syllables and syllables into letters. By arranging and rearranging the letter-order it is possible to introduce new words progressively. The same method may also be applied to sentences. Different sentences may be formed by changing the word-order.

Ram kills a tiger.

A tiger kills Ram.

This method seems perfectly viable from the psychological point of view. The learner starts with meaningful words and proceeds to sentences. It is also possible to teach reading and writing simultaneously by means of this method.

PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURE OF TEACHING WRITING

Reading and writing are twins constituting the process of learning. One is as important as the other. Acquisition of the art of writing is necessary for carrying out certain vital functions of everyday life such as signing one's name, carrying on correspondence, maintaining records and expressing one's thoughts and ideas in the written form. The basic aim of teaching writing is to develop the skill of writing well enough so that the learner may at least sign his name, write his father's name, his own profession and address and other such essential things. The aims and objects of teaching the art of writing may be as follows:

- (i) To develop the skill of writing with a view to meeting practical needs.
- (ii) To express one's ideas and feelings in the written form.
- (iii) To enhance personal and social efficiency by acquiring high-level achievement in writing.
- (iv) To use the art of writing as a source of pleasure and a means of self-expression.

The above aims imply two important aspects of the programme of handwriting-teaching, namely, teaching the skill of writing and teaching the uses of writing. The programme may be phased into four distinctive parts:

The First or Preparatory Stage

It is necessary to make a preliminary study of the special

needs and natural handicaps of the adult learners. The general level of maturity, previous school or literacy background, ability to write if any, and their present urge or need for learning this skill, whether ability to write will help them in their vocations or avocations etc. are some of the vital questions to be carefully weighed before launching upon the programme. Some adults may be suffering from physical handicaps, stiff fingers, calloused hands, and inflexible muscles. Some preliminary exercises may be necessary to soften if not remove these defects in order to enable the adults to work with greater ease and pleasure. Some adults may also suffer from shortness of vision. Bolder type-faces of 12 or 14 pt. should be used in such cases. If defective eye-sight fails to be corrected by treatment, the adult should be advised not to try to learn how to write.

A proper observation of the defects of the adult will enable the teacher to adopt the right remedial measures in advance. The following practical steps are specially recommended by way of initiating the programme of handwriting lessons.

- (i) The name of each adult student may be transcribed in clear and bold letters on the blackboard. The students should be asked to observe the movement of the teacher's hand and imitate the same by moving theirs in the air. This should be repeated.
- (ii) After several exercises as above, each individual student should be asked to trace his name on the blackboard.
- (iii) The next step is to get the names written in fairly bold letters on pieces of paper. The adult learners should then trace the writing with a pencil. If there is a left-hander, he should be encouraged to write with his left-hand. This should be practised several times.
- (iv) After the student has been able to trace his name with ease and confidence, he should be encouraged to write from memory. This proce-

dure will enable the members of an adult class to gain a preliminary notion of the art of writing, and also overcome some of the initial difficulties.

The Second Stage: Learning to Write

The question as to the time when writing should start after the adult has enrolled himself as a regular attendant of the class still remains largely undecided. In the traditional type of child-teaching reading precedes writing. In adult education it is very often advocated that reading and writing should proceed simultaneously. In the preliminary lesson reading and writing should stand interspersed. In the alternative, writing may be started shortly before instruction in reading begins. The acquaintance made with letter-forms and words will facilitate reading. The argument advanced in support of the simultaneous beginning of reading and writing is that the student learns to write new words or word-elements as these are introduced in the reading lessons. Practice in writing promotes progress in reading.

The question whether cursive writing or script writing should be adopted needs to be discussed at some length. Many adults prefer cursive writing and reject script-writing as childish. But, script writing is definitely easier and may be done more legibly than cursive writing. Considering the muscular adjustments necessary for cursive writing, which may prove a hindrance to the adult beginner, the easier and the simpler form of script-writing may be adopted. Besides, script-writing is being increasingly wanted in filling up forms and answering questionnaires, etc.

Basic Shapes of Letters

The basic shape and form of the letters in all alphabets consist in horizontal lines, vertical lines, oblique lines, curves, dots and strokes, etc. In Bengali-writing and to a large extent in writing the Roman script, the pupil should first practise in drawing horizontal and vertical lines in each direction and in joining them together. The next step is to draw lines sloping, say, at an angle of 45 degrees. After

that drawing of small curves, clockwise and anti-clockwise, may be practised. After the pot-hooks (curved strokes) have been sufficiently practised the learner should be taught to write letters, and plenty of writing should be practised. The letters to be practised may be introduced in the order of presentation in the Primer, or in groups which are similar in shape and form. These are then to be written as parts of words or combined into complete words as soon as sufficient number of letters have been learnt.

Criticism has been made of this method of teaching writing and practising lines, curves, strokes and letters in isolation. Practice on the elements of letters without reference to the words is regarded as meaningless and hence uninteresting. By and large, writing may be taught equally quickly by the global method (syllables, words, and even sentences treated as units) as by the above-mentioned synthetic method (combination of lines and curves into letters, and that of letters into words) by expert teachers. Bengali writing is far more complicated than writing the Roman letter, and hence the easier synthetic approach deserves preference.

Subject to the length of the words or sentences and also the capacity of the adult pupil, the word or sentence approach is more motivating than the other method. The significance of the letters in word-formation and their normal relationship with each other are more easily recognized, and the students are aided by the training received during their reading lessons.

A weakness inherent in this method is that not enough attention is often paid to the structural features of the letters to ensure good quality in writing. But this, more or less may be ascribed to the defects of the teacher rather than the defects of the method.

The more frequent and popular procedure adopted is to practise new letters and words as they are introduced in the Primer. This ensures practice in writing all the letters and words used in reading. Close relation between reading and writing facilitates both, and quickens progress. In some

cases a standard copy-book containing carefully worked out sequence of writing is used. The words and sentences needed in daily writing, for example, the student's name, father's name, special family-names, address, the days of the week and months of the year, etc., provide lessons of practical interest.

The first lessons in writing should be constructed around familiar ideas and situations. Writing one's own name, the names of relatives, village, post-office, street, town, and writing labels for personal luggages, simple messages and letters, etc., may be cited as examples.

Blackboard, stone-slates and chalk-pencils are some of the convenient materials wherewith the adults may start their first writing lessons. After that they may be provided with broad sheets of paper and thick and smooth pencil of medium or soft lead. Pen and ink should not be used until considerable skill in writing with a pencil has been acquired.

The second stage of writing envisages, in brief, the complete writing of the alphabet including joint forms, diphthongs and, of course, the numerals. This should be accompanied and followed by writing of words, phrases and sentences of significant meaning and interest to the adults. The finale of this stage is the introduction of the writing of short and simple personal and business letters as well as maintenance of personal and family accounts.

The Third Stage: Continuation Exercises

This stage is nothing but continuation and further improvement of the basic skills already acquired and putting them to more and more practical use. Emphasis should be laid upon improving the quality of writing. Individual deficiencies should be carefully checked and corrected by comparison with model writings. The purpose and forms of personal and business letters (date, greetings, content, closing, signatures and address, etc.), should be explained and taught in greater detail. Other writing activities at this stage may be pursued through a series of lessons on preparation of price-list, catalogue, information-bulletin, a letter

accompanying a remittance and letters to the newspaper-editors or the municipal authorities regarding various local problems. Further uses of adult-writing in the community should be carefully surveyed, and lessons constructed thereon.

The Fourth or the Advanced Stage

Writing for the joy of writing, and writing for creative and constructive purposes marks the culminating point of such a programme. This point may be reached by continuous exercises, writing effectively not only for earning one's livelihood but also for discharging one's duties as a leader or an active member of the community. In a comprehensive sweep the programme at this stage may be conceived as one intended to help the writer in deriving increasing pleasure from recording his experiences and expressing his ideas. The advanced training will enable the adult to participate in various forms of writing activity with increasing confidence and competence to express his ideas clearly, forcefully and correctly. Training at this stage is to provide continuous stimulation and guidance. The adult receiving such training is expected not only to live a richer and more productive life, but also render more valuable service to the community.

IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOW-UP

One of the reasons why literacy campaigns often fail is the lack of reading materials suitable for the border-line literates. An adult of normal intelligence may learn how to read and write after careful exercises for four to five months. His achievement, however, is of a very rudimentary nature. It is necessary to cultivate and continue reading and writing so that the initial achievement may not be lost sooner than gained. Even children completing the four-year Primary Course are apt to relapse into near-illiteracy after some years if they have no facilities for continuation of studies. Literacy attained by the adults after an intensive short-time course is more vulnerable than that of the regular school-going children. The adult's initial success is mainly due to the skill and enthusiasm that a resourceful teacher can bring to bear upon his work. But once the neo-literate is left to himself, he is required to sustain his interest and enthusiasm with what he may read in the books and periodicals. Reading materials have to stir up interest at this stage. Unless, therefore, the neo-literate finds something useful and interesting to read, he soon loses all incentive for reading, and considers his earlier endeavours fruitless and meaningless. Suitable literature for neo-literates is usually scarce in almost all languages. A just-literate has often very little to choose from the commonplace stuff which is much above his level. Production, publication and availability of suitable literature constitute a very vital aspect of the adult literacy programme.

Who is a Neo-literate?

A neo-literate is one who has acquired the technique of

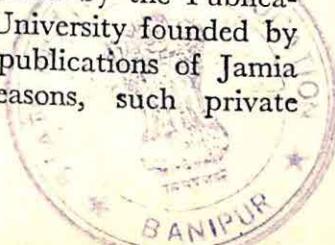
reading and also writing, but is not yet able to read with speed, pleasure and full understanding. This may be so in respect of an adult made literate through a short-term course, and also a regular school product having no facilities for post-literacy education.

Some Problems

There are many difficulties in providing such literature. Production and publication of such literature is usually unprofitable from the commercial point of view. Few publishers will willingly undertake such a venture, nor would writers of any consequence feel inclined to write for this purpose. The number of new reading public is generally small. Cheap mass-production is not possible. There is also the problem of local dialects and regional slants in languages spoken and read by millions of people. A universal and uniform linguistic standard may not meet the needs of all. Some kind of regional production may be found necessary. Besides, some varieties are called for by the fact that such literature must always be related to the environmental and occupational interests of the readers.

Production—Publication—Distribution

It is clear from the above that none but the Government is in a position to assume responsibility of production—publication and distribution of such literature. By Government again, no one particular department is meant. The work should be shared by the different departments—particularly, Education, Health, Agriculture, Cooperation, Panchayat etc. There may be some agencies other than the Government as well. The Extra-mural Departments of some foreign universities produce and publish literature at popular level as a part of their extension activities. A special mention may be made of the "Lok Siksha Granthamala" (series for popular education in Bengali) published by the Publication Department of the Viswa-Bharati University founded by Tagore, and also the Hindi and Urdu publications of Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi. For obvious reasons, such private



agencies require subsidy from the Government for carrying on such a losing enterprise.

Some Adult Interests

Simple posters, pictures, folders, pamphlets, books, periodicals and newsletters, etc., are some of the common forms of neo-literate publications. The actual undertaking of any programme of production must be preceded by a proper survey of the interests of the new-reading public. The commercial publishers adopt the trial-and-error method for finding out what sells well. But such risks are not worth taking in the present case. It may be possible to obtain information about subjects or books that the neo-literates may like to read by means of carefully framed questionnaires. The adult neo-literates are naturally interested in matters directly concerning their daily life and occupations. Any casual survey of adult interests will point to the following subjects: Local news, Agriculture, Health, General Knowledge, Occupations, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Civics, Politics, Religion, Biography, Fiction, Homecraft, Sports, Money and Trade, Folklore and Tribal Customs etc. The list is not exhaustive. It may be supplemented by adding Family-planning, First-Aid, Home-nursing, Railways, Transport and Communication, Gardening etc.

Authorship

Another important question involved is the right choice of the author. Scholars and professional writers are not necessarily the best. In writing for the neo-literates the most fundamental points that the writer should bear in mind are that (i) the proper neo-literate level in respect of vocabulary, language and style should be maintained; and that (ii) neither scholarly and didactic, nor flat and funny treatment as in the nursery stories and rhymes is appropriate. The writer needs a special training. The 'Literary workshop' experiment initiated by the Ministry of Education of the Government of India provides such training for the new writers. Revision in the light of discussion with the Director

of the workshop, and the actual field-test of what is written by an individual make such productions more objective.

Graded Vocabulary

The use of graded vocabularies is a prerequisite to the production of literature for the neo-literates. The arbitrary subjective choice of words by the writer or the editor should be replaced by scientifically graded word-lists. In English, Spanish, French and other European languages valuable experiments resulting in formulation of word-frequency counts have been, and are being made. Such word-counts are made on the basis of materials drawn from various sources—spoken dialects, children's literature, radio broadcasts, newspapers, popular literature and the like.

Functional Literacy

A tentative target of functional literacy which envisages (i) a thoughtful reading attitude, (ii) mastery of reading skills enabling the reader to recognise new words and phrases independently, (iii) ability to clearly grasp the meaning of what is read to the extent of at least 90% accuracy of the literal meaning, and (iv) ability to read silently for meaning within a vocabulary range of 3000 words or more is attainable as a result of a phased lesson-programme comprising the first stage of 300 most frequently used words to be followed successively by 1000, 2000 and more words. The skill of reading is to be developed to such an extent that the rate of silent reading speed may be raised to 150 words per minute. Constant and careful attention should be paid to vocabulary load, word-length and sentence-length in framing lessons for the neo-literate persons.

The Style

What about style? Running prose or conversational form? Which one would appeal more to the adult reader? The answer is: both may be used according as the situation demands.

A middle course, namely, simple running prose accom-

panied with occasional dialogues deserves special consideration. Simplicity and understandability are the two essential features of such literature. Simple sentences should be used as far as practicable. The sentence-length should not exceed the 4"-breadth of a page, which is our normal vision-span. Flourish, rhetorics and tautology should be eschewed. We may start with 40 words per page for the first book, and gradually go up to 300 words a page. Simple comparisons and similes may be used to explain and illustrate the lessons when necessary. The presentation of any subject-matter should be direct and forthright, and must not be hedged in by irrelevant digressions. The sentences, the paragraphs and chapters etc., should not be loose and disconnected but rather linked by sense and sequence.

Printing and Get-up

The size, get-up and printing of books should conform to certain patterns and standards. Attractiveness and readability stressed so much in connection with the content of materials are also important in respect of the physical appearance of the books. Type-face, format and layout etc., are matters that need special attention. Type-face to be used in printing books for neo-literates should be bold, simple and legible. Types smaller than 10-pt. should never be used. 12-pt. or better still 14-pt. types are recommended for use in printing running texts. The lines should be well-spaced, and at least three-quarters of space should be left blank around the printed area. This is necessary for giving relief to the reader's vision. If the matter is printed in columns blank space should be provided in between the two columns in order to prevent the reader from reading across columns at a time.

Breakdowns into paragraphs and chapters should be judiciously provided to obviate motony, and more so, to give the newly initiated reader a sense of achievement and satisfaction in having completed something.

Without insisting on any precise standard dimensions for non-periodicals, namely, books and brochures etc., lightness

and portability should always be aimed at. A pocket-size book measuring $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ inches may be accepted as the average size. A larger format is necessary for magazines and periodicals because large-sized pictures and photographs usually accompany reading materials.

Illustrations

Appropriate diagrams and illustrations serve two essential purposes. Illustrations add to the attractiveness of the books and chapters, and also help explain and clarify the matter to be read. Interesting results have been obtained in measuring comprehension of reading matters with or without illustrations. Illustrations for mere decorative purposes without relevance to the content should be avoided.

Distribution

No useful purpose can be served by producing attractive and well-prepared materials unless these reach the people for whom these are intended. In a country like India the bulk of the new-reading population is scattered widely over the rural areas. The task of making these books easily available to these readers is beset with difficulties. First, there is the difficulty of transport and communication. Secondly, there is the lack of any special urge on the part of the new readers to acquire these materials. In recent years, the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation, Government of India have brought out such literature in considerable quantities for mass consumption. This unpriced stuff is distributed free through the agency of the Block Development Offices. It is both difficult to measure the extent of actual use of these materials, and to assess their impact upon the reader's mind. Free distribution suffers from this apparent disadvantage. Sales figures are often the only method of evaluation of the popularity and usefulness of books.

So far as India is concerned it is obviously not yet time to replace free distribution by outright sale. Let us presuppose certain conditions, namely, utility and indispensability of the books more or less inducing the readers to buy

them, and also readiness on the part of the readers to pay for these books. The conditions are interrelated. One helps the other. Sales through the normal trade-channels may not suffice. Professional salesmanship is hardly equal to the task of popularising these materials. Profit motive alone will not guarantee sufficient circulation of these books right into the villages where the people live, and induce them to purchase the books through persuasive salesmanship, or through display and exhibitions. The books must needs be low-priced on non-profit basis. This may be possible only under Government enterprise or with Government subsidies to voluntary organizations.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY—A PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY

A school teaches a man how to read and write. Formal education imparted and acquired through the institutional hierarchy of schools, colleges and universities leading up to diplomas and degrees etc. amounts, by and large, to gathering information. Proper assimilation and appreciation of the information thus received starts a little later. Education in its fuller sense starts really after the completion of the curricular courses at the different levels. Accepting this premise, one may rightly assert that the process of education runs its full cycle when the faculty of thinking combines with and complements the processes of reading and writing. The angel of education soars high on three wings—reading, writing and thinking. These three things put together stand for education in its complete connotation. If the school helps a man learn how to read and write, it is the library that really teaches him how to think. The importance of the library, therefore, is as much essential and indispensable as that of the school. Public library service today constitutes an inseparable part of any progressive educational system.

A modern university is a collection of books, said Carlyle. To put it in other words a collection of books i.e. a library is the People's University. This brief statement requires some explanatory elaboration. A public library is very rightly a People's University in more than one sense.

Firstly, the public library stands to cater for by far the more numerous section of the Community that remains, and may always remain outside the pale of institutional education. Even in countries where

education is enforced as a matter of compulsion, the coverage offered by the schools is limited for natural reasons. A large part of the population outside the age of compulsion does not enjoy the benefits of institutional education. The vacuum thus created poses a problem of first-rate magnitude. The public library very largely helps fill in this vacuum. The public library is intended to educate the public mind. The library not only retains and consolidates people's literacy, but also promotes the people's thinking faculty. And, creative thinking is the mainspring of progress. Thinking is the mother of creation. The library is the container as well as the carrier of human culture.

Secondly, a public library by its own right enjoys certain advantages over the school. The school, the college and the university may serve many but not all. Admission to these institutions is conditioned by factors of age, aptitude, fitness etc. Admission to a public library is not subjected to such restrictions. The doors of a public library are open to all without any distinction of age, sex, caste, community, or social, religious and political affiliation. A library shelf provides a safe haven to all warring theories and ideologies. Books on communism peacefully coexist with books on capitalism. People of different religious beliefs, and belonging to opposing political schools may resort to the library, as a place of peace where knowledge may be sought, and truth may be pursued without let or hindrance. There can be no better example of peaceful co-existence.

And thirdly, a public library is but a categorical recognition of a man's birth-right to improve himself culturally and spiritually. The library affords him the opportunity and the wherewithal to extend his horizon. A democratic social system and political administration need above everything else an en-

lightened citizenry fully aware of its rights, duties and obligations. A public library spreads public education. The common man, who exercises a great power through the instrument of the ballot, must do so with the full knowledge of the implications of his power.

The public library is a collection of books and reading materials. So any proposition about the library leads direct to the admitted importance of books, and the purposes that books may serve. Why do people read? What and how do they read? These are some of the fundamental questions that confront any proposition on libraries. The first question is why and what do people read? People read for various reasons and for various purposes. Some of these may be listed as:

- (a) Some read for pleasure.
- (b) Some read for information.
- (c) Some read for knowledge.
- (d) Some read for enlightenment.

There are books that provide materials for recreation such as books of story, thrillers and the like. There are books that supply information. The almanac, the year-book etc. are primarily books of this type. A scholar working for an academic degree reads with a view to increasing his knowledge. There are books that enlighten as well as inspire the human mind, and leads it on to the nobler pursuits of life. The list, however, is not complete without a reference to those vile and base materials that degrade and debase the reader's mind and flame his sordid passions. The library discharges its functions properly by discarding these hollow, vile books by resisting the pressure of popular demand. The library's real function consists in creating a climate for creative and purposeful reading. It is the duty of a good library to meet the needs of its readers. It is also the duty of the library to promote reading-habit, and develop the right taste for reading. This is to be done through the selection of books, and their proper display and distribution. A com-

petent and imaginative librarian is to the readers what a good housewife is to her family. The good housewife is aware of the likes and dislikes as well as the needs of each member of the household, and serves the menu accordingly. A good librarian should likewise pool his resources so as to serve the needs of the different categories of readers. Imagination and resourcefulness are the two essential virtues that make a good librarian.

The books, the librarian and the readers are the three obvious constituents of a library. These three things go together, and each calls for the same degree of care and attention as the other. The successful organization of an individual library, or a library system must needs have an effective machinery for selection of books and reading materials. Knowledgeable persons and competent connoisseurs must be associated with this important task. Books for the library must be selected keeping in view the needs of the people it is intended to serve. Selection of personnel is indeed the crux of the whole question. The success of the library depends ninety per cent so to say, upon the librarian and the staff. Last, but definitely not least, comes the question of readers. Happy relationship between the library and staff and the reading public ensures progress and popularity of the institution. The library above everything must provide a clean and congenial atmosphere to attract the reader. The Librarian and staff are required to liaise with the reading public, their function being essentially that of public Relations Officers. To the Librarian the readers will turn for information, help and guidance. People who are by nature timid and lack in initiative may perhaps fight shy of coming forward and stating their needs to the Library staff. In such cases the initiative of approach rests with the Library personnel. The progressive and sympathetic Librarian has himself to initiate the aloof reader into the pleasure of reading. He serves as the link between the books and their readers.

All the wonders of human achievement, all the essence and profundities of human thought, man's struggle for mastery over nature through the unending journey since the beginning of the creation, the ups and downs of history and

human destiny, man's joys and sorrows, love and frustration and all the rest are preserved in the printed pages of books. Here in this wonderland of books, man finds himself face to face with knowledge, wisdom and also follies. It is here that he finds food to appease his intellectual hunger with. It is here that he may also expect to find answers to the questions that may beset his mind.

The library is an integral part of the national system of education. It is through the library service that the best fruits of human culture are disseminated to the people at large, and it is through the libraries that the nation as a whole receives intellectual nourishment, and maintains and improves its power of thinking. National progress or development is basically inconceivable without a planned and pervasive library service.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY MOVEMENT IN FREE INDIA

There has been a significant shift in the meaning and concept of a public library in recent times. Apart from being a depository of materials for leisure-time reading or a place for specialised study and research, it has now been transformed into an active and dynamic institution for public education.

The essential functions of a public library are:

- (a) To supply to any reader or group of readers, the books and related materials for which they may ask.
- (b) It is not only enough to satisfy the reader's particular needs, but also to stimulate and promote his desire for reading.
- (c) There should be the fullest practicable provision of materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times, national, international and local; and books and reading materials should not be prescribed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. No institution, more than a public library ensures intellectual co-existence and ideological toleration.
- (d) As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its precincts for useful social and cultural activities, and discussion of current public questions on terms of equality to all groups in the community regardless of their beliefs and affiliations.

Five-Year Plans

An important phase in the Public Library movement in

West Bengal as also in other parts of India was ushered in with the inauguration of the scheme for Development of Library Service in pursuance of the First Five-Year Plan.

The Government of India in the Ministry of Education appointed a Library Advisory Committee during 1956-57 to go into the question of public library service in India including its existing conditions, ways and means to improve it, and future requirements of the country. The Advisory Committee made certain recommendations, the more important ones of which are as follows:

- (i) That the State and the Central Government should accept the responsibility of establishment and maintenance of public library service. They should have a 25-year Library Plan to raise the condition of library service to a dimension commensurate with the cultural and educational needs of the people.
- (ii) That Library service should be free to every citizen of India.
- (iii) That the organisational pattern in the country should comprise the National Library, the State Central Library, District Library, Block Library and Panchayat Library.
- (iv) That the Government should levy a cess of 6 paisa in a rupee on property-tax in all places with permission for the local bodies to raise the cess.

The Library Advisory Committee did not, however, envisage that the entire library organisation for the country could be financed out of the cess-collection. Nevertheless the idea at the back of a library-cess is to ensure popular will and association with the movement.

The Position in West Bengal

In the wake of these developments steps were taken in West Bengal to establish the State Central Library, District Libraries of which there are 19, two Regional Central Libraries, 24 Area Libraries in as many selected rural areas, 20 Sub-divisional|Town Libraries, and 504 Rural Libraries.

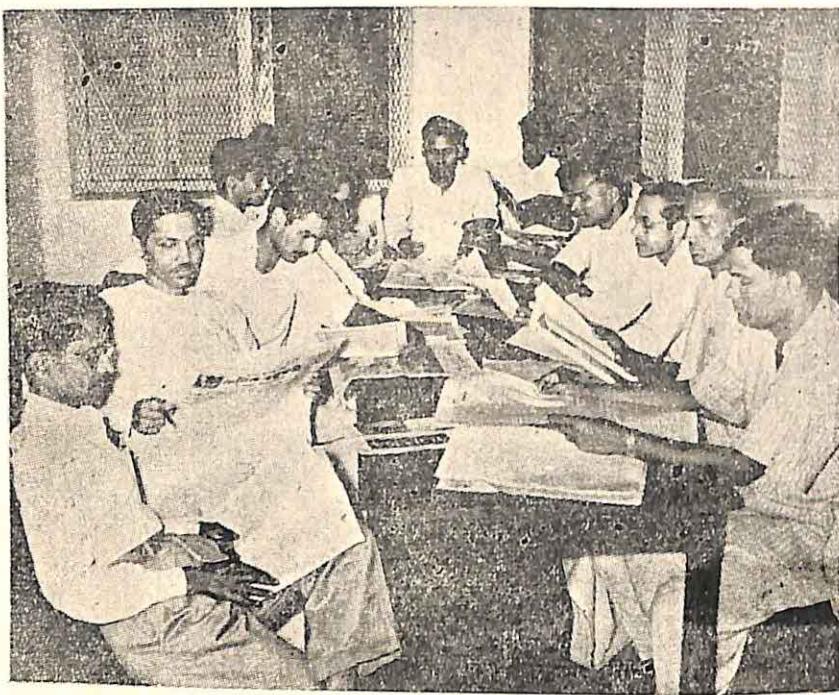
All these are sponsored libraries, the entire financial responsibility for running them devolving upon the Government.

The Central Advisory Library Committee did, however, hope that the Government would be able to take up the entire financial responsibility of the public library service. But for obvious reasons, this has not been possible. Nor has it been possible to enact any Library Law in most of the States sanctioning imposition of a library cess. The only States in India today are Madras and Andhra, in which the public library services are partly supported and financed by public tax. But an inherent defect in the Acts operating in these States is that the Government is required to sanction not more than what may be collected as cess in a particular district. This means that if a district fails to collect its full quota of cess, it stands to forego the full amount otherwise due from the Government. On the contrary, although there is as yet no Library Law and Library Cess in West Bengal, it has been possible, largely due to the progressive outlook and active sympathy of the authorities concerned, to get considerable funds for the development of library service. During the First and the Second Five-Year Plans substantial amounts were available for setting up the outer structure of a public library system, and although, there has been quite a heavy budget slashing since 1963-64 on account of the national emergency, the standing commitments of the first two Plan are being duly honoured.

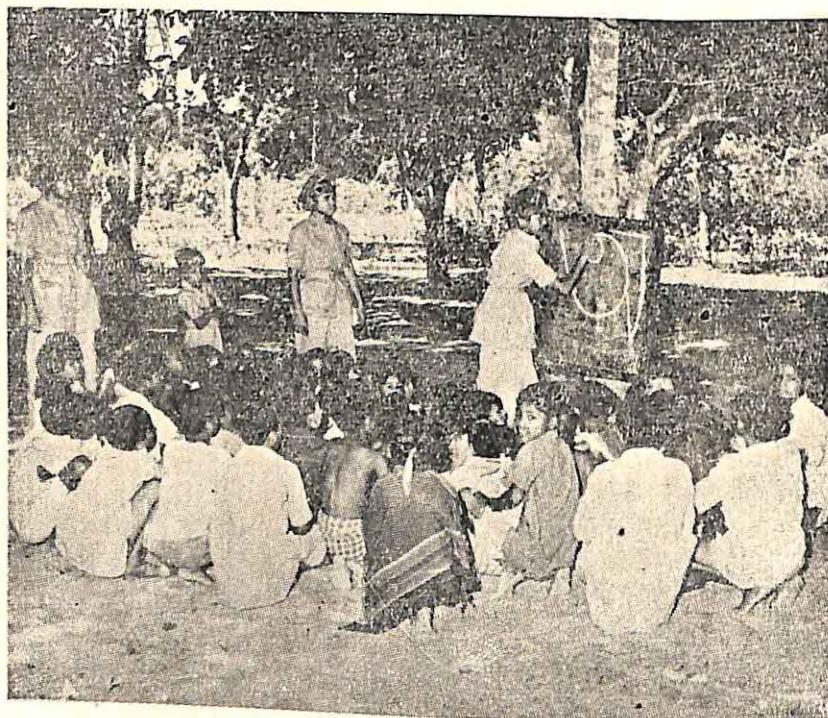
The All-India Situation

A general running review of the Public Library situation in India as a whole, reveals that the pattern of the schemes now being worked out in the different States toes very nearly the same line. The principles enunciated by the Central Advisory Committee have been adopted with necessary local variations.

In short, all the States have now their State Central Libraries. All the 350 districts have been provided with one District Library at least. Library Service has percolated further downward through the agency of Sub-Divisional/



The newspaper-room is ever so full in a Town Library



An N.C.C. girl cadet demonstrates the Airtight container to the girls

Town and Rural Libraries. Each of these categories of public library has its mobile adjunct, either a motor van or a bicycle mounted with hampers to go round and make the books available to the remote readers.

Present and Future Requirements

Seventy per cent of the people in West Bengal are still counted as illiterate. Eradication of this appalling amount of illiteracy poses as much a problem of desperate urgency, as the problem of consolidating literacy does. The Public Library Service is an indispensable aid to and a guarantee for consolidation of national literacy. The public library also serves as a complement to the educational institutions, and helps complete and consummate the long and complex process of education. It provides people with free and unfettered opportunities for the continuation of education. The task of schools and colleges is, in the main, to equip the scholar with reading and writing ability. The library initiates him into the useful art of reading with thinking. For creative reading library is undoubtedly the best place.

In about 1957 India had nearly 40,000 public libraries most of them small stagnating pools of books. Between them they had a book-stock of over 80,00,000 with an annual use of about 400 lakhs. Today the country spends about 4/5 crores of rupees on library service.

The Public Libraries in India have only one book for 50 readers, and as many as 20 persons between themselves read only one book in a year.

Some comparable statistics from other countries are revealing. The U.S. Public Libraries have with them 1.24 vols. per capita and book-use per capita is 3.37. The country spends Rs. 4.55 per capita.

In U.K. the respective figures are 1.15 vols. per capita, book-use of 7.7 per capita and an annual expenditure of Rs. 3.50 per capita.

We are living in an age of books. The wisdom of the ages gone-by is stored and preserved in the books. The

books contain the solution of the problems that face us today. The books also give us a vision into the future. Individually, and also as members of the human community, our dependence on books and allied materials increases from day to day. The public library as the open-door store-house of books stands out as an inalienable factor in the life of the modern civilized man.

INSTITUTIONAL AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Dissemination of knowledge and promotion of culture being the fundamental objectives of the different categories of libraries, there is, and there should be ample common-ground for cooperation between them. It is true that an institutional library, a College library for example, has certain specific purposes to fulfil. The reading clientele of a College library is composed of its students and teachers. As an integral part of the College the library has to meet the needs of the Professors, Lecturers and Tutors in their day-to-day class-room teaching as well as in reference and research work. The College Library is also to serve the needs of the students. Beyond that there is hardly any contact between the College and the out-of-college reading community. A College or University Library is usually not open to the general public. Ways should be devised as to how far the colleges and higher academic bodies may substantially contribute to the promotion of popular education.

Government Sponsored Libraries

Some progress has been achieved during the first three Five-Year Plans in the field of Public Library Service in the country. Previous to the Five-Year Plans public subscription libraries originated generally from, and sustained themselves with whatever meagre resources the sponsors and organisers could pool in the form of subscriptions and charities from the interested people. Naturally, such resources were limited. Though the number of subscription libraries was not negligible in Bengal, indicating admirable public

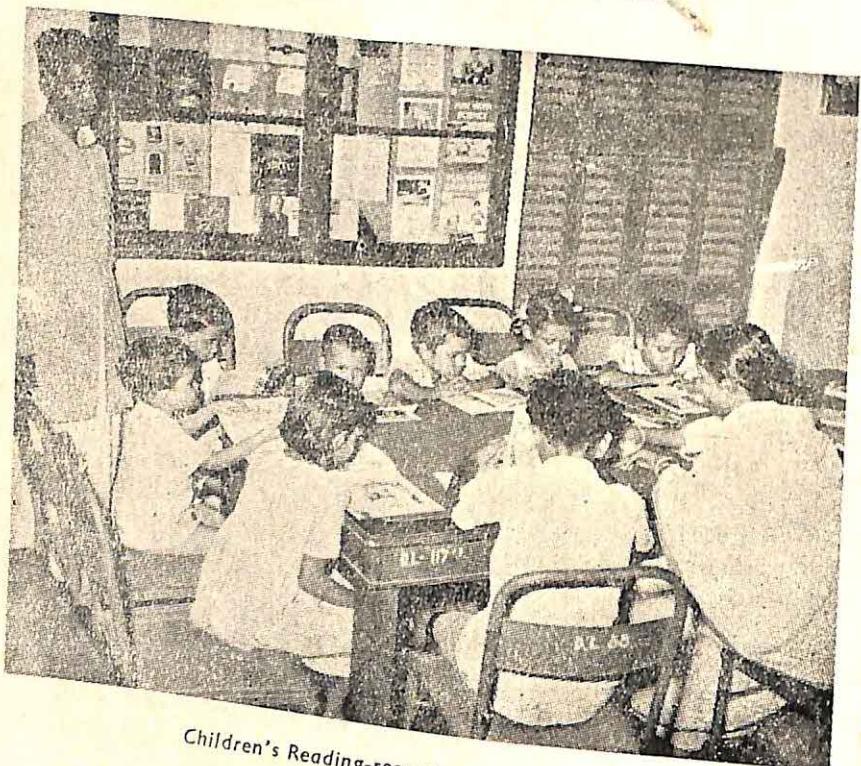
initiative and organisation in this direction, the fact remains that for want of steady flow of finance, organizational competence and technical guidance the services of these libraries could not be coordinated and fully developed. Prior to independence State assistance to these libraries was in most cases nil. Since independence, and in the wake of the Educational Reconstruction Programme, plans for the organisation and development of libraries for the general public have been given attention to. A hierarchy of libraries comprising the State Central Library, District Library, Area Library and Rural Library has been set up. But these Government-sponsored libraries do not yet come under the meaning and purview of 'public libraries' in the sense that these are not yet, except in very rare cases, free for all members of the public, nor are these tax or cess supported. But then these sponsored institutions have already gone half-way, and may be looked upon as the partial beginning of a free and universal public library system in the country. For the present purpose we shall refer to these libraries as public libraries. We shall also call the public subscription libraries by the same name.

Text-Book Library

These sponsored libraries have largely succeeded in fulfilling the objectives that they were intended to fulfil. These libraries have proved popular, and both membership and demand for books have been steadily mounting. One of the functions and responsibilities that these libraries have had to take upon themselves directly in response to public demand is provision of text-book sections for school and college students. Provision of text-books in the public libraries was not until recently thought of as a necessary part of its programme. Rising prices of text-books coupled with their non-availability in view of import difficulties pose a serious problem for the students of the Higher and Technical courses of study. There is, therefore, a considerable demand for text-books in all the public libraries so far set up. Requests for Government grants for opening text-book libraries and Day students' Homes are pretty numerous. All these point to the fact that the institutional libraries are not in a position in all cases to



Village Women's Open-air Post-Literacy Class



Children's Reading-room in a Village Library

be with the problem of adequate supply of text-books to their students and teachers. This is generally so due either to inadequate funds for book-purchase usually earmarked for a school or college library, the limited hours for which the school or college library normally remains open to the students, and also due to the fact that a school and college library is, as a rule, not available for us by the non-students. School teachers in particular, are required to improve their academic qualifications with a view to improving their service prospects. They are in need of the text-books prescribed for Honours and Post-Graduate studies. Being not eligible to use the College and University Libraries they have to fall back upon the resources of the Public libraries for whatever they're worth. This demand for text-books has of late been growing, and all the public libraries—from the State Central Library down to the Rural in West Bengal—have been striving to build up fairly sizable collections of text-books to meet this demand. The public libraries have, as a matter of course, thrown open their doors to the student-groups, teachers and scholars. These institutions are substantially supplementing the work, which is, logically, the responsibility of the institutional libraries. But the resources of public libraries comprising membership fees and Government subsidy, are not adequate enough. Their commitments are many. Only a fraction of the funds may be set apart for replenishing the text-book collection. An institutional library enjoys a more advantageous position in this respect. Its commitments are unilateral. It has not to cater for the larger circles of the non-academic community of readers. It has merely to serve the needs and interests of its restricted clientele. In many cases again, the funds at the disposal of a Higher Secondary School or a College are not smaller than that of a public library of comparable size.

Extensive Library Service Needed

Considering the country's overall resources which are none too unlimited, and also considering the rapidly increasing number of book-users both in urban and rural areas coming up in the wake of the spread of education in the

country, the question as to how the facilities may be put to their best possible use, deserves very careful consideration. The institutional libraries may in a very large measure meet the exigency of the situation.

With the spread of general literacy and expansion of Primary and Secondary education both in the rural and urban areas, the need for an extensive library service has become well pronounced. There are villages as well as towns still going without any organised public library service. The progress in the field of library service is far from keeping pace with the general expansion of education.

On the other hand the progress in the field of Primary, Secondary and Higher Education has been more reassuring. Thirty-two thousand and four hundred Primary and Basic Schools enrolling over 36,00,000 scholars, nearly 5,000 Secondary schools with an enrolment of over 12,00,000 lakhs and 145 Degree Colleges with an approximate intake of one lakh and twenty thousand give a fair account of the educational achievement in West Bengal during the post-Independence period.

Library facilities in all these categories of educational institutions are not, however, always upto standard. Many Primary or Basic Schools, for instance, go without libraries. Many Secondary School libraries are mere apologies for the same. The colleges are, of course, in a much better position. Many of these have their libraries really worth reckoning in respect of the bulk and variety of the book collection. But then the facilities of service outside the four walls of the college with a view to benefiting the larger community are almost nil. The doors of the school and college libraries are invariably closed to the public.

The Scandinavian Example

The Public Schools in some of the Scandinavian countries make their libraries available for use by the public in general. The school library maintains two sections, one exclusively for the students, and another for the non-student members of the local community. This system is an excel-

lent piece of organisational perfection. Not only is duplication of library service avoided particularly, in a small parish, but also the school is brought closer to the community. The School library service for the public is a commendable measure adopted for cultivating happy school-community relations. This is also commendable on grounds of economy. The poor village communities may not just afford to set up two sets of libraries with all the necessary paraphernalia. The local school or college may be in a position to make good this leeway. Extension work in the shape of library service does also provide good opportunities to the teachers and students to come face to face with an urgent public problem, and in trying to get to grips with it, they develop social responsibility, which is often found lacking in the so-called highly educated people.

The proposition, therefore, is that the school and college libraries should be so organised as to render service to the general public as well. There should be active and practical cooperation between the public and the institutional libraries in all possible circumstances. This may be in the form of inter-loan service of books, exchange of technical assistance and similar other things. Reading needs of the community may be well served by the school and college libraries. In all possible cases institutional and public libraries should come closer and organise complementary service for the benefit of the larger circle of readers. Valuable community service may be organised through these libraries. These possibilities deserve to be fully explored.

SOME MEDIA OF MASS-COMMUNICATION

The power and potentiality of the informal approach to education by providing stimulus to our senses, feelings and emotions are universally acknowledged. Formal education in the class-room finds a powerful ally in some informal and mechanical aids, the efficacy of which is particularly noticeable where large audiences are involved.

Generally speaking, the media of mass communication may be divided into two categories, namely, the mechanical type and the agency type.

The Mechanical type. Under this category come all forms of scientific inventions and mechanical devices that are calculated to aid, supplement and quicken the process of learning informally through sense-perceptions—visual, auditory and emotional.

Approach through the eyes or visual:—

(a) Museum (Stationary and mobile):—

Exhibition (on health, art, education, industries, agriculture, commerce, etc.)

(b) Printing Press:—

Books, pamphlets, newspapers, periodicals, broadsheets, wall-newspapers, photos, pictures, paintings, cartoons, maps, posters, charts, graphs, diagrams, flash-cards, etc.

(c) Demonstration

Lantern and slide; Epidiascope and reflectoscope; Film-

strip (for projection of still pictures, models and objects).

Educational films; documentaries; Feature films; Television.

(d) Blackboard and flannelograph.

Approach through the ears or auditory:—

Gramophone, Tape-recorder, Microphone, Radio.

The Agency type. This comprises all forms of organizational and institutional agencies intended to provide educative and cultural entertainment to smaller or bigger groups of people.

Dramatization (Shadow play; Puppet play—Marionette; Tableau; Pageant; Pantomime and Procession; Stage-drama; Music and Dance).

Discourse (Lecture; Discussion; Counselling; Debate; Study-group; Forum and Symposium; Conference; Library and Reading Room; Club and Community Centre; Co-operative; Health Centre, etc.).

These media of mass-communication particularly, the big three—the Press, the Radio and the Film—are the most powerful instruments of propaganda as well as mass-education. Some of these instruments are rather costly, and their large-scale use may not always be feasible in the poor and backward countries.

The adult educator should, however, see that these are used in the right way, i.e., in meeting the real needs of the people and not merely for business profits or mass-persuasion through ingenious propaganda.

Special Type of Aids

Museum and exhibition. These are very common and popular devices to acquaint the community with the recent developments in art, natural history, science, agriculture, engineering, health, sanitation and co-operation, etc. These stimulate individual as well as collective efforts to bring

about material improvement in the above fields of social activity.

Guided tours, gallery-talks and lectures are some of the standard techniques employed in clearly explaining the exhibits to the visiting public. These may range from the mere elementary to the highly specialised modes of instruction. Training in the various aspects of citizenship may be imparted through the help of these agencies.

(b) **Press.** The printing press with its modern mechanised equipment is the most powerful agency for the production of reading materials on a massive scale. The new type of portable printing press is a handy machine which may be suitably used for the preparation of reading materials for adults in rural areas at a comparatively low cost.

(c) **Wall-newspapers.** Unlike printed newspapers, these are generally prepared by the local adult educator for stimulating the habit of reading and keeping itself well-informed. Important and interesting items of news and useful information are written in bold and attractive letters on a large sheet of paper. These are illustrated with cartoons or old pictures collected from newspapers and magazines. The whole thing is pasted on a board or a wall. Just a little initiative and practically no cost makes it an excellent teaching aid in rural community centres.

(d) **Demonstration.** It has been scientifically estimated that 84% of our perceptions come through the eyes. People learn things and remember things more quickly by seeing than by hearing. This valuable and irreplaceable faculty may be trained and fully used so that transmission of knowledge may be made quicker, easier and more effective. There are various ways of approach to informal education through the eyes.

(e) **Lantern and slide.** The use of slides can vitalise training and fix up a topic clearly in the memory of the audience. Carefully selected slides and similar other visual aids can (i) attract attention, (ii) arouse interest, (iii) test understanding and help retention, (iv) review training and (v) present the next problem or subject.

(f) **Epidiascope.** Epidiascope is the simplest and least expensive of all kinds of projectors. Its special advantage is that with it can be projected any opaque object such as a picture, the page of a book or any other interesting material in magnified form to make it distinctly visible to a large number of people at a time.

(g) **Filmstrip.** Filmstrips are considered to be the best type of visual aid to subject-teaching. Its advantage over the motion picture consists in the fact that projection on the screen is still, and may be kept so for any length of time. It is also more advantageous than the ordinary lantern-slides which on account of their weight and brittleness are being gradually replaced by filmstrips.

(h) **Educational, documentary and commercial films.** A single picture may be effective to some extent, but pictures presented in sequence have an accumulative effectiveness. When pictures are shown in sequence at the rate of at least twelve per second they give the impression of motion or animation in the object shown. There are films made with definite educative object, documentaries and common feature films—each serving its own specific purpose.

(i) **Television.** Television is the latest type of advertising medium. It is a distinctive improvement upon radio-broadcasts because it presents the actual picture instead of a mere description of it. Television broadcasts that may be used for adult training are those that deal with exhibition, operation and actual use of the product. Amusement and recreational activities, social and religious ceremonies, sporting events, agricultural projects, school pageants and many other outdoor events may also be televised to illustrate specific phases of training.

(j) **Black-board and flannelograph.** The black-board either fixed or portable is the most commonly used visual aid in educational institutions. Its simplicity and cheapness makes it eminently suitable for use in adult education centres as well. Portable roll-ups may be conveniently used in the temporary village centres shifting from place to place.

A medium-sized flannel board (4'×4') with a painted

background is used for illustrating stories, narratives and talks. Symbolic pictures pasted on the flannel pieces are thrown upon the board one after another in sequence as the story progresses.

(k) **Gramophone.** The gramophone is a popular mechanical medium used for entertainment as well as for educational purposes.

(l) **Tape-recorder.** By this it is possible to reproduce at convenience any speech, recital, song or vocal performance for the entertainment and edification of audiences at different places and at different times.

(m) **Radio.** It is the most important of all forms of auditory method of informal education. Broadcasting has two main educational purposes, namely, educating the listeners through the actual content of the programme, and preparing them for further education. Difficulties of transport and communication, the seemingly insuperable obstacle in the way of carrying the message of education to the rural populace has been largely overcome through the agency of the radio. Its use on a mass-scale is also viable from the economic point of view.

Agency Type of Aids

Dramatization. Dramatization is a teaching method by way of an appeal to our emotions and feelings. Almost every subject in the curriculum, namely, Home Economics, Languages, Safety Education, History, Geography, Civics, Health and Hygiene and so on may lend itself to dramatic presentation. Wherever we want to depict life, character or culture or all these three together play-acting can be used with advantage. Plays can vividly portray important ideas related to social reforms, war, crimes, unemployment and family planning, etc. There are several types of dramatization ranging all the way from the carefully rehearsed full-length stage performance to the informal five-minute playlet, and from the pageant and tableau to the often whimsical puppet show. It provides opportunity for community participation more than anything else.

Pageant. It is a kind of community drama usually based on local history and local tradition presented largely or wholly by local actors, and performed out-of-doors.

Pantomime and Tableau. Pantomime is a silent drama of which the effect depends on the movement of the actors, who generally do not speak. A tableau is a picture-like display composed of human characters against the background of a story. It may be motionless as well as silent.

Puppet. Puppetry enjoys a distinctive position as a theatrical art which has many advantages otherwise denied to the regular stage-play. It can present ideas with extreme simplicity and without elaborate scenes and costumes. The distracting details can be done away with and attention of the audience solely focussed on the central theme. There are several kinds of puppets, shadow-puppets lighted from behind, hand-puppets and finger-puppets worked directly on the operator's hand, hand-and-rod puppets and string-puppets operated from above by strings.

Discourse and Discussion Methods

Lectures. In adult education lecture is the most widely used method for imparting knowledge and information.

Forum. This method consists usually in the presentation of a subject-matter by an expert followed by a question-time in which members of the audience ask questions or make brief statements. There may or may not be a second person on the platform as a presiding officer to introduce the speaker, and to act as chairman of the subsequent discussions.

The advantages of the method are, first the speaker is given adequate opportunity to present his case without break or interruption of his own thought sequence; second the audience is enabled to clear up obscure points and to participate actively in the discussion. This method is good training for the audience and also perhaps for the speaker.

An interesting variation of the forum procedure of discussion is the dialogue technique in which there on the platform are two speakers co-equal supposedly in rank and specialised knowledge. One of these speakers assumes the dual

role of chairman and child inquisitor. The speaker introduces the subject in outline and then asks a leading question designed to bring out what the second speaker thinks about it. By questions, answers and comments without set speeches they develop the topic rapidly. When they find themselves in agreement the topic is thrown open for audience-participation. This procedure is stimulating to the audience. It becomes all the more dramatic if both the speakers are at some disagreement at the start.

Conference. A conference is a public meeting on some specific issue or issues, in which the participants jointly express their opinion in the form of resolutions. It is in such gatherings that the people may be trained in the art of expressing themselves freely.

Discussion-groups. In the forum method the audience is relegated to the position of listeners whereas in discussion method the members of the audience are active participants.

Group-discussion may be of two kinds. The first is that in which the purpose of the group is to study the problem in order to work out a course of action. This is called "situation approach" method. Here the attitude of the leader and of the group is "what shall we do?" There is another kind of group-discussion method when the attitude of the leader and of the group is "how shall we understand?"

The usual procedure in a group-discussion is for the leader to start with an announcement of the topic, a summary of the conclusions of previous meetings and a brief survey of some of the particular aspects of the topic under consideration for that meeting. He then asks a question. He may invite participation by the group by addressing the question to a particular individual, but as the meeting progresses the leader will usually find that he will have to do little direct questioning, except possibly to bring out the shy, retiring person. Most of the leader's time will be devoted to general guidance of the course of the discussion. At the end, the leader sums up the various points raised, suggests topics for further reading and study and closes the meeting timely before the interest dwindles away.

Developmental technique: The development method of discussion is applicable to groups not much accustomed to reading, who need a teacher to sum up the proceedings into clearly phrased and easily identifiable concepts. This need is fundamental as most of us, particularly, in entering for the first time a new field of study, need the guidance of an expert, who will isolate a new idea from a mass of ideas, state it clearly and leave it with us to think over at home until the next meeting. The participants depart from the meeting with the feeling that they have learnt something, and also that they have something now to work on. As they go more deeply into the subject, and as they begin to progress consciously in their ability to grasp new ideas and interpretations, the need for this guidance decreases, and the power of talking over new ideas develops.

The developmental method is also useful when the attendance is haphazard and casual or when there are 'difficult' persons in the group, for instance, the loose-tongued chatterer, who goes off with little effort, the habitual loud-speaker or the self-centred dialectician. Such elements should, if necessary, be gently but firmly ruled out of order.

Excursive technique: In this method the leader attempts to give very little guidance. Having as his purpose only a general exploration of the topic from as many angles as possible with no set conclusions to be reached, the leader will confine his guidance to pointing out the blind alleys here, more helpful paths of approach there, and to summarising from time to time the progress of the discussion.

Initiating a discussion is a problem that worries many leaders most of whom seek to start the group talking by asking questions. Some are of the opinion that discussion ought not be started at all. There are always some persons seated about the table and talking among themselves when the leader arrives. The leader simply carries the conversation forward from the point where he finds it and gradually leads the conversation around to the topic proposed for that meeting.

Panel discussion technique: A group of four to eight

persons and a chairman (the panel) in full view of and facing the audience discuss among themselves as though no audience were present the various aspects of the topic. When the pattern of thinking of the panel has become sufficiently established, the chairman rises and briefly summarises the results of the co-operative thinking aloud by the panel members, and invites the audience to contribute. Remarks or questions from the audience may be directed to the panel as a whole or to an individual on the panel. At the close of the meeting the chairman again summarises the discussions.

The general rules of procedure are that no one is to be allowed to make a speech, and that the audience will be invited to participate only after a definite pattern of ideas has been developed by the panel.

Counselling: The problem of adult education being essentially a problem of educating the individual, some arrangements for advice and guidance to be given by experts and specialists should also be made.

Debate: It is discussion on a selected subject of topical interest. There is a chairman and there are two or more speakers representing two different view-points and speaking thereon. It attracts a large number of people. It is lively and thought-provoking. It teaches the art of thinking and also the art of expression.

Study groups: These are generally organised by a group interested in some particular subjects, but often sponsored by an enthusiastic group for the community as a whole. This method anticipates considerable background of education and is, therefore, suitable for advanced groups.

Rural Libraries: These may be of two kinds. Generally stationary or permanent and mobile or itinerant. Libraries have more extensive adult education functions than any other institution.

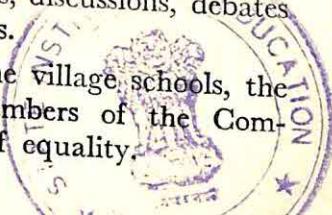
The requirements of a rural community library may be briefly summed up as follows:

- (i) Books must be well-chosen and easily available.

- (ii) Regular flow of useful materials—books, magazines, journals and newspapers etc.
- (iii) Provision of reading-room facilities and issue of books.
- (iv) Different media at mass-communication besides print should be provided such as films, radios, projectors.
- (v) And above all, the librarian should be an expert in rural community organisation, and must be able to make the library useful for the local public in the following manner:—
 - (a) Utilise the opportunity for informal education that exists in the library by making announcements and suggestions, preparing book-lists and publicising them in local newspapers, publishing local magazines and pamphlets, arranging talks about books, preparing exhibition tables, drawing up a plan of informal study in the reading course and arranging lectures and discussions etc.
 - (b) Adult education motive must influence the selection of books. Display and circulation of worthwhile books and pamphlets must be arranged.
 - (c) Reading matter should be supplied and follow-up reading habit stimulated by organizing emergency education classes, evening classes for adults, study-clubs, discussion-groups, lectures, concerts and exhibitions.
 - (d) Special thought should be given to the problem of reaching the unserved groups such as the unemployed and out-of-school youth, hospitals, the blind, the crippled etc.
 - (e) The individual reader should be advised as to the subject and selection of books.

Clubs and Community centres: These are intended to provide facilities for indoor and outdoor games, physical recreation, music, drama, dance, reading-room and library, display of posters, pictures, films, lectures, discussions, debates and other forms of recreational activities.

These may be usually situated in the village schools, the public halls or in private houses. Members of the Community will have free access on terms of equality.



Co-operative: Organisation and management of Co-operative Societies occupies an important place in the field of rural adult education. It is through the agency of these societies that the adults may be properly trained to appreciate the value of mutual help and interdependence. The co-operative movement is also probably the best means so far evolved to build up the economic life of a rural community on a sound and stable basis.

Health centres: The rural health centres are meant not only to provide medical relief and amenities to the rural people, but also to make them conscious of their health and sanitation problems, and to rouse them to action in solving these problems themselves. Organisation and management of health centres should, therefore, constitute an important part of the adult education programme.

MUSEUMS: NO OLD CURIOSITY SHOPS

A public museum or national gallery as we usually visualise is a massive building with a Grecian facade, tall columns and a long flight of stairs leading to spacious halls crowded with stone, bronze and metal statues, plaques, fossils, skeletons, plasters and a thousand other exhibits. A casual walk round will consume about five to six hours, which is enough to exhaust the visitor. The world's well-known museums such as the British Museum, Victoria Albert Museum, the Natural History Museum at Kensington and the Louvre in Paris are specially noted for their varied and numerous collections of exhibits. A museum of this category is a popular tourist attraction. It is also the repository of materials for research and specialized studies. Museums may promote study and research in a variety of subjects including history, art, architecture, anthropology, sociology, and other sciences. But a museum of huge dimension can do but little more than arouse awe and amazement in the minds of the unwary and unsophisticated visitors. The tremendous array of exhibits is too bewildering to make any tangible educative impact upon the visitor's mind as he is guided through the galleries as if in a trance. It is a sort of quick pilgrimage giving satisfaction of something having been seen, but not absorbed or assimilated.

Instinct of Possession

A personal museum is a manifestation of man's inherent tendency to amass, preserve, and display his possessions. Nevertheless, personal collections either of arms and weapons,

war and hunting trophies, ornaments, garments, pictures and portraits, specimens of sculptures, toys and trinkets, parchments and manuscripts etc., to name a few, constitute the origin and nucleus of the modern museum. Many of the historic exhibits in Louvre in Paris bear testimony to the cultural lust of Napoleon, who plundered the countries overrun by his Grand Army, and carried away these things as war booty.

The British Museum and the Museum at Cairo are mainly devoted to the study of history and antiquities. Several other world-famous museums specializing in particular fields of knowledge, deserve mention. These are the Science Museum in Munich, the Health and Hygiene Museum at Dresden, and the Social Science Museum in Vienna. These museums promote research in special branches of scientific studies. The British Museum Library in London, once the nerve-centre of a far-flung capitalistic empire, was the place where Karl Marx in exile, studied and worked for years on his revolutionary thesis on communism: *Das Capital*.

A New Outlook

It was in the nineteenth century that plans were broached and attempts were first made to reorientate the museums as institutions of public education. A new museum movement was born in the Western countries. The origin of this new outlook and new movement lay in the widespread appreciation of the imperative need for universal education as the necessary logic of adult franchise, the sheet-anchor of parliamentary democracy. The museums came to be used as promoters of public instruction. In 1873 the Royal Society of Art, London, appointed a Commission for drawing up plans for the development and organization of museums. The terms of reference of this Commission were to find out concrete and practical ways and means for developing the museums as schools for popular education. The well-known museologist Joseph Choate of the United States made the following significant observations while inaugurating the Metropolitan Museum in New York in 1880:

"The plan was not to establish a mere Cabinet of curiosities, which serve to kill time for the idle, but gradually to gather together a more or less complete collection of objects, which should serve for the instruction and entertainment of the people".

In these observations the aims and objects of, and the purpose that a modern museum is intended to serve, have been very well stated. The important role that a museum may, and should play as the container and carrier of mass education and culture needs further expiation. The museum is no old curiosity shop. It must be organized, developed and run as a live and dynamic agency of mass education. Its activities must be planned for and directed to that end.

Vision and Audition

Sensory perception through sight and sound is more vivid, abiding and hence more tangible than mere reading and lecture-listening. Audio-visual impressions ensure clearer understanding. This particular approach establishes a kind of short-circuit contact between the subject and the learner. A museum is to exhibit only the real things and not their imitations, models, miniatures or replicas. The skeleton of the whale, the real mummy, the frozen mammoth and other such things in their real state are definitely more attractive and curiosity-inspiring to the visitor than their models, photographs and pictures. Photographs and pictorial charts may, however, be used, if necessary, in further explaining the exhibits. The following subjects lend themselves specially to the museum technique of instruction:

- (i) Local economic problems: their solution.
- (ii) Improvement of agriculture, forests and rotative cultivation in the modern scientific way.
- (iii) Health education.
- (iv) Adult education.

Acculturation

Though comparatively infrequently used the term **acculturation** is not a new coinage altogether. It means

commingling of cultures and cultural trends. Contact between and co-existence of cultures lead to synthesis, in other words acculturation. Backward people are more prone to cling to their old ways and habits, and fight terribly shy of innovations or changes. Age-old beliefs and prejudices stand out as the first obstacle to the introduction of any new idea, and implementation of any new scheme. The traditional method of cultivation, for example, is doggedly resorted to by our cultivators. It is a tough job indeed to get them converted to the new and more improved means and methods. The museum technique, i.e., demonstration and exhibition goes a great way towards the understanding and adoption of the new methods, and helps remove prejudices and misgivings.

The things to be kept in the museum should be carefully and scientifically classified and displayed as such. Mobile museums are an interesting modern development. Universal public education has been rendered imperatively necessary by the growth and expansion of industry, science and technology. Museums may be most profitably used, and as a matter of fact, they are being used in promoting general knowledge amongst the masses in the industrially developed and developing countries. This is being done not so much through the agency of the massive museums located in the big metropolises as through the smaller-sized regional, local and institutional museums. School museums and Departmental museums serve a very useful purpose. The municipalities, the commercial concerns and even the Army, the Navy and the Air Force today maintain their own show-rooms and museums for displaying their respective programmes and progress. It is good education by itself to go round the museum of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute at Darjeeling. It provides a direct impetus to the spirit of mountaineering.

Some of the different kinds of museum today are:—

- (i) Store-house Museum,
- (ii) Display Museum,
- (iii) Research Museum,
- (iv) Students' Gallery,

- (v) Children's Museum,
- (vi) Museum for the General Public.

Irrespective of the different kinds of exhibits collected and kept in these museums, their usefulness as educational media is determined by certain common fundamental principles. Educative and recreative are the two main purposes that a public museum stands to serve. It is, however, not a school. In no sense of the term it is so. No syllabus-wise and routine-guided instruction is imparted there. But education in the wider sense is to be imbibed by seeing things and knowing about them. The museum exhibits generate curiosity, interest and joy, and joy and interest are two essential concomitants of the process of learning. Learning without joy is sooner lost than gained.

Village Museums

In our scheme for spreading education amongst the rural masses, the village museum is a desideratum. Smaller local museums with a view to orientating the traditional outlook and attitude, and acquainting the people with new ideas should be an indispensable part of the community Development Programme. These museums need not necessarily be biggish and expensive, but efforts should be made to build them up with locally available materials as institutions of popular interest. Relics of local history, tradition and customs deserve to be collected and kept in the village school museum. The teachers and the students may help a good deal in this behalf. Such undertakings will undoubtedly develop their power of observation and selection. Specimens of cottage industries, local flora and fauna, stone and terracotta potteries, utensils, textiles, old manuscripts, scrolls, and parchments, etc., are indeed suitable objects for such collection. Much may come as free gifts to the school, but some may have to be purchased and paid for also. Comparison between the old and new specimens helps development and improvement of industrial manufacture.

Preservation and Display Techniques

Preservation is equally important as collection. All

things are subject to natural decay. Stone and metallic exhibits may not decay as perceptibly as other less tangible materials, but accumulation of dust and vagaries of weather are corrosive none the less. Chemical preservatives should be used according to necessity.

Classification and display constitute an essential aspect of museum management. Pedestals, glass-cases, frames, hangers and wooden props, etc., are some of the special types of furniture needed for a museum. The technique of display demands easy visibility and accessibility of the displayed objects to the visitors on round.

Labels by way of briefly introducing the objects to the visitors are necessary. Such introduction should, of course, be brief, to the point and couched in simple non-technical language as far as possible. The importance of such introduction is to be assessed by the amount of curiosity aroused in the visitor's mind. Attractive labels call for some literary and journalistic skill just as newspaper headlines do. Such introduction also helps explain the process of evolution and development of a particular class of exhibits.

An Integrated Programme

Mere exhibition is not always enough. The school-museum roster needs to be integrated into the academic life of the school itself. The school-museum is to be organized and worked as an active and integral adjunct of the school as the library and the laboratory. The exhibits call for proper explanation and interpretation. But who is to explain them—the specialist or the teacher? A trained museologist or an educationist? An educationist, after all, is in a much better position to use the museum and all that it contains to supplement the curricular studies than a museum-expert. The teacher himself may best undertake the task of interpreting the exhibits in the context of the regular school courses through lectures, discussions and film-shows, etc. On the contrary the charge of conducting the general public through the galleries of a public museum should vest with the museologist.

Our Fourth Five-Year Plan now under consideration contemplates organization and development of a regular museum service for the spread and promotion of mass-education. A shift of focus from massive museums to smaller educational museums in the Plan will be timely and welcome.

AUTOMATION AND CULTURE

Beset with the problem of number and space the Head of a Department of a University casually referred to the need for modern audio-visual aids for the purpose of class-room lectures. A walk round the over-packed lecture-halls and the crowded corridors in the buildings of the University of Calcutta will at once leave the visitor in no doubt about the logic of the learned professor's remark. Personal contact between the teacher and the taught is the last and least thing to be expected in the circumstances. That a mike would be an essentially needed equipment to enable the lecturer to make his voice just audible to his 200/300 listeners sprawling all over the hall and the corridor has hardly any room for argument.

Audio-visual aids to education have already come to stay in the technologically progressive countries, and their earlier inroads into the less developed countries like ours have also made enough impression, and presage a bright future. Even economically and educationally not far enough advanced countries like the U.A.R. and Pakistan seem to have stolen a march as it were over ours by introducing T.V.

New Horizons

The gifts of modern science and technology are many and varied. The more common and traditional types such as the projector, the recorder, etc., are already on the run as automated devices for publicity, entertainment, teaching and recording. The more sophisticated versions, namely, the television, the audiotape, the micro-film and the electronic

computer, etc., are also making their impact albeit slowly upon the day to day life of man. In the age of automation, human life and culture are undergoing a far-reaching technological orientation as well as transformation. The impact of the machine-age and the effects of automation upon culture are unmistakably perceptible. The first and the foremost of these effects is curtailment of manual labour and reduction in time. Automation on the one hand has given man the benefit of less work-hours and more leisure. On the other hand, this age of science is highlighted by the discovery of a thousand horizons of knowledge. Science is opening up amazing prospects and possibilities: visits to the Planets, discovery of life in other parts of the universe, creation of living tissues from inorganic materials, changing the hereditary features of the genes, transmission of power and communication by the light beams and host of other marvels.

Telling Effects

Circumventing geographical distances and regional barriers automated aids have made educational facilities available to the interested individual. Independent self-instructional activities may now be systematically organized around T.V. lectures, audiotapes and language lesson broadcasts. It is not mechanically infeasible to provide an extensive library service for the population of whole cities and states through high-speed computers and programmed and televised materials in print. All the world's books may possibly be recorded and stored on the top of a single reading table, and may be viewed on an electronic magnifier. These and other achievements in the field of science and technology are bound to produce natural but revolutionary repercussions upon the system of education and human culture. Educational planning today is essentially concerned with the two-pronged problems: enormously increasing enrolment, and want of corresponding space. Automated aids are, therefore, increasingly pressed into service for the solution of these problems. A mike installed in the overcrowded lecture-halls, programmed radio broadcasts on class-room lessons, and televised demonstration of scientific experiments or compli-

of the Community Development Programme. He is in other words the Education Extension Officer. To put in concrete terms the programme is to assist, encourage and motivate the village families to increase agricultural production, to improve housing and sanitation, and to enhance their income and to raise the standard of living. Secondly, the programme aims at improving educational facilities, opening up opportunities of employment, and to motivate people to work together in a spirit of cooperation with a view to building up a peaceful and progressive community. Considering the aims, objects and methods of the Community Development Programme it is more appropriate to call these personnel Social Educators rather than Organizers. The real role of the Social Education Organizer (including that of the Mukhya Sevika) is nothing if not educational.

Vital Role of Social Education

Social Education has to play an extremely vital role in the Community Development Programme. It is intended to equip the people with the basic skills of reading and writing, and to enlighten them with the fundamental knowledge of the rights and duties of citizenship.

The Social Education Programme is also meant to promote and sustain social harmony and solidarity.

Practical Functions Two-fold

Let us now turn from these rather abstract propositions to the more concrete and practical aspects of the functions of the Social Education Organiser. This functionary has to play a two-fold role in the Community Development set-up. He has to play his part as a member of the Block team. The Block set-up composed of personnel belonging to the various nation-building departments of the Government has been conceived of as a compact body—a team under the captainship of the Block Development Officer, responsible for coordinating the activities of the team-members, and lead them on towards the goal. In the scheme of things the Social Education Organizer's function is of a special significance and

importance. The other Extension of Officers in the Block set-up are specialists, each has to perform his own specialized job. It is the Social Education Organizer alone who is both a generalist and a specialist, and as such it is for him to liaise between the different functionaries, and thus help promote the often talked-of team-spirit, understanding and coordination. By training and function the Social Education Organizer is competent also to act as the person to prepare the ground, to set the stage ready so to say, for the introduction of any new project or scheme. This part of his job is extremely important as well as difficult. On the Social Education Organizer devolves the responsibility of interpreting the programme. It is for him to go round and explain to the people the new ideas in their own language. This is how the Social Education Organizer has to lend his helping hand to the other Extension officers. As a generalist, the Social Education Organizer has to prepare the minds of the beneficiaries, and make them fit to receive and understand the specialists. It is here that the Social Education Organizer is the best helper of the Agriculture, Industries and Co-operative Extension Officers. An example: the Family Planning campaign cannot possibly be launched upon an unwary community with any appreciable effect without first dispelling old prejudices and obsessions through a mission of publicity and propaganda. Thus the Social Education Organizer may play a very important part. He is an indispensable ally of all other Extension Officers.

Secondly, the Social Education Organizer has his own particular sphere of work as a specialist. This part of his role is essentially organizational and supervisory.

- (a) Organization of various groups, Mahila Samiti, Youth-Club, Farmers' Club, Community Centres etc.
- (b) Organizing literacy campaigns and conducting literacy classes, organizing training courses and camps for teachers; organization and supervision of rural library service, radio rural forums etc.
- (c) Organizing recreational activities—'mela,' fair, exhibi-

cated surgical operations are intrepid approaches to the aforesaid problems of number and space.

The automated devices also envisage a new educational system which guarantees self-administered instruction to the stay-at-home learners according to their tastes, temperament and capability. There will be very little need of a teacher for formal class-room teaching. The machine more or less supplants the man. A computer geared to the programmed courses helps and guides the learner at successive stages, and also assesses and evaluates his progress from time to time. For all practical purposes the services of the teacher are nearly done away with.

Fundamental Issues

But thoughtless automation in the field of education raises certain fundamental issues. Can machine really replace the man? Can a robot with all its mechanical precision and functional perfection oust man from his rightful place? The answer is categorically negative. After all, man cannot be equated with an assemblage of gadgets. Precision or perfection can be no substitute for the imperfections that a man is. A man is the sum total of his antics and angularities, which may otherwise be called his instincts, impulses and emotions, etc. Teaching is essentially transmission of personality, the lighting of a thousand lamps with the spark from one. A good teacher can do incomparably better than the radioed lessons and televised courses. A few commonplace tools may perhaps explain science more vividly and effectively than pictures of laboratory demonstrations transmitted from thousands of miles via a satellite orbiting around the earth at an altitude of 20,000 or more miles, and that at a staggering cost. The personal factor, the human factor is all-important in teaching. The machine reproduces a song, but has no soul.

Uneasy Ease

Less working-hours and more leisure, which result from large-scale application of the mechanical labour-saving devices bring in the problems of uneasy ease. Culture is, in

more than one sense, the mode of using leisure-time through diversions and recreations. Leisure-time activities manifest themselves in cultural creativity. The highest echelons of culture are but products of off-time occupations.

The effects of new leisure have neither been very efficacious nor happy. Reckless long-distance drives, alcoholic addiction, the races, pornography, sex-adventures and thousand other pursuits of pleasure, and sensuous thrills have largely ousted sober and serene forms of recreation. Excitement and sensation are more in demand than recreative ecstasies. This mood has been aptly explained by John Galsworthy, a notable thinker and writer of the present age.

"The film", he says, is quite a justified expression of machine civilization, a natural outcome of the Age. It gives amusement; it affords pleasure. It is vulgar, it is cheap, but we are vulgar, and we are cheap and it's no use pretending we're not. A vulgar age wants vulgar amusement. The humdrum people want something to balance the greyness, the banality of their lives. They want blood, thrill, sensation of all sorts."

The mechanical means of mass amusement impose a serious curb upon the individual's freedom of thought, taste, expression, preference and predilection. Standardization imposes uniformity, and uniformity deprives the individual of his creative stimulus. The individual is but a passive listener, an inert spectator. Everything is regimented, everything is made to order. Mass-pressure steamrolls individualistic entity.

A Way Out

What then is the way out of the conundrum? That the individual needs to be provided with resources wherewith he may retain his originality as well as individuality in a society of regimented values admits of no controversy.

The way out lies in the provision of adult education of multi-faceted and comprehensive type. Through proper study and appreciation of the good things of life, the people with leisure may grasp and assimilate the profound thoughts

of the master-minds. Systematic continuation alone enables a man to cultivate his faculties, to exercise his mind and edge his imagination. And that is the way to become fuller and more cultured.

COMMUNITY CENTRES

“Good communications make bad manners” is a piece of truism. The world has certainly grown smaller in dimension as a result of advancement in Science and Technology, which have made communication so easier and quicker than what it used to be half a century ago. It is true that peoples of the different parts of the world are daily getting closer to one another in the physical sense. But despite all this, they are pulling away more than pulling together in the emotional and spiritual sense. One is likely to meet foreign tourists oftener than meeting one's next-door neighbours. This is more so in the urbanized areas, where people meet together in political expediency or for professional and vocational purposes, but seldom for social or purely personal reasons. In the rural areas the neighbours and near-neighbours in spite of caste or social stratification that may be, are cognizable factors whether for good or ill. In the crowded cities and towns the occupant of the next-door flat is usually looked down upon as a nuisance, or is overlooked and unnoticed. The social tension and pressurized town-life hardly encourage neighbourly feelings, and friendly dealings. Social cohesion and integration prove merely a pious wish not possible to be fostered and achieved. Class differences and seeds of social disintegration find a fertile soil to strike roots in, and flourish. History records that the downfall of many an ancient culture and civilization was brought about by class inequalities and want of social integration.

Social Integration

The social and emotional value of get-together is evident as much in the case of individuals as in the case of groups and communities of people as well as nations. Distance breeds suspicion and differences. Getting-together helps allay them. Familiarity breeds contempt is a common saying. But is there any alternative to amity and understanding growing except through acquaintance and intimacy? On a larger than individual scale such communion between people of different social or economic standings, political affiliations and religious persuasions is essential for emotional integration and peace and harmony.

Community Organization

The old-pattern self-contained villages maintained some kind of a community organization, through which their major problems used to be solved. The old-time villages and village communities lived a kind of compact life centred around common economic interests and cultural ties. The present-day sophisticated cities which owe their origin and growth to industrial development are an antithesis of the old-type rural community. The people are more individualistic and ego-centric, and less concerned with others' affairs. Some unity of feelings on narrow communal lines is fostered by membership of a particular church, or trade-unions. But such unity suffers from certain obvious limitations, and can never transcend parochialism inherent in religious and vocational associations. Something more is needed to bring individual citizens together irrespective of their caste, creed, vocations, etc. A wider platform is needed to help develop social and civic unity.

A modern community centre, which is intended to provide constructive leisure-time activities for people, who come to it voluntarily in search of recreation, knowledge and companionship serves these purposes well.

Objectives and Programme

A village, town or township according to the size of its population and area may have one or more community

centres to serve as the common meeting-place of the people of immediate vicinity. The community centre should, above everything else, be organized and conducted on the basis of equality between one citizen and another. The main objective of the organization should be to cater for all without regard for social and financial status. Every member of the community should have free and unrestricted access to the amenities that the centre may provide. The premises of the centre should preferably be centrally located to ensure easy attendance of the members. Its programme of activities should help easing class and communal tension, and promote cooperation instead.

Programme of Activities

Recreational activities of educative value should be given the place of priority in the programme for a community centre. Some such activities are envisaged as follows:

- Dramatic performance,
- Musical meets,
- Debates and discussions,
- Social and cultural meetings,
- Library and reading room,
- Indoor and outdoor games,
- First Aid facilities,
- Small carpentry and smithy workshops, Sewing and Needlework,
- A stock of common agricultural and gardening implements to be available on loan,
- A Family-Planning Unit,
- Radio and Film Projector,
- A Children's play-centre,
- A Gymnasium etc.

All these services call for a large number of hands to administer them properly. The overall charge may rest

with a Warden to be assisted by a bare minimum of paid staff such as a Gardener, a Library and Audio-visual assistant. The bulk of the programme should, however, be executed by voluntary workers. Voluntary service, and active participation by the members constitute the essence and spirit of the community organization. A competent warden will enlist the active and willing cooperation of the members. He will in the main inspire, guide and supervise such participation.

Finance

The community itself will be responsible for raising funds for the establishment and maintenance of the centre.

While the amounts paid as donations and endowments may vary according to the donor's ability to pay, there must never be any money-classification in membership.

Building and Equipment

A model building for a community centre may have a spacious central hall capable of accommodating a sizable portion of the local population, and a multipurpose theatrical stage with green rooms, which may be improvised as a platform for public meetings, physical feats demonstration and like other things. The foyer at the entrance may be used as a library-cum-reading room except when any dramatic performance or film show may be going on. Two rooms flanking the foyer are needed for the purpose of accommodating the library, and the warden's office. Provision of drinking water and sanitary conveniences is essential for a community centre.

The above general criteria apart, a community centre may be organized according to the taste and requirements of the community whom it stands to serve. A successful community centre really reflects the genius, temperament and free will of the community.

THE PROBLEMS OF WORKER'S EDUCATION

Growing mechanization and spread of industries have lent special importance to the problems of worker's education. New responsibilities have been thrust upon the workers. More leisure and less work-hours are the resulting benefits of mechanization. This enhances the necessity as well as the possibility of worker's education. The word 'worker' has assumed a special meaning of its own. In the present pre-dominating context of industrialization, the term is used in most countries as a synonym for industrial worker and labourer as distinct from farmers and followers of rural vocations.

Flexible Content

The content of worker's education is marked by a degree of flexibility. It varies from training for Trade-Unionism to the most liberal form of adult education. UNESCO lays down a broad definition encompassing cultural and aesthetic studies and knowledge of Humanities. Worker's education today stands for a broad and liberal education of the adult working people. But the term does not include technical job-training.

The UNESCO programme for the promotion of Worker's Education throughout the world envisages amongst other things:

- (i) Exchange of workers, under which project the industrial workers of one country are enabled to visit their colleagues in other parts of the world.

- (ii) The worker's fellowship, which enables selected workers to study abroad for several months.
- (iii) Establishment of the International Centre of Worker's Education, under the auspices of UNESCO.

Owing its origin to the mid-nineteenth century industrial spurt in the Western countries, the Worker's Education Movement has now reached a stage of maturation, and directs its aims to a much higher target than the traditional bread-and-butter subjects such as collective bargaining and grievance-therapy. Workers' Education looks upon its beneficiary essentially as a man having both rights and duties as a person, as a member of the family, as a citizen of a country and above all as a member of the human race. Man is more than a mere technician. The present-day Worker's Education Programme is broadly divided into two parts:

- (i) Study of the subjects especially needed for understanding the history and aims of the labour movement, inter-group relations, public speaking and parliamentary law, housing and community service. In short it is education in trade-unionism, of which collective bargaining is the most important part. All this serves the special needs of the 'worker'.
- (ii) Cultural studies and recreational activities that help the worker towards a better understanding of his social, economic and cultural environment. This serves his wider needs as a member of the society and as a citizen.

The Trade Unions have the special responsibility not only for training their members for service in the unions but also for discharging their civic duties properly. The basic idea of Worker's Education today is to impart useful knowledge to the worker and develop his personality. There is a good deal of resemblance between the Folk School Programme and Worker's Education. The Worker's Institutes in the western countries provide evening-class instruction to their members through lectures, library service and recreative performances etc.

Political Education

In some countries, for example, West Germany and Yugoslavia today, Workers' education aims at providing political education to the workers with the object of initiating them to the high principles of democracy and socialism. The right type of political education does not, however, mean political indoctrination, or motivated political propaganda, or brain-washing as it is derisively called, but liberal training of individuals to enable them to discharge their duties as citizens of the country.

The teaching of the workers does, as in the other fields, require an appreciative understanding of the special conditions and circumstances under which they are required to work. The teachers are resource persons, leaders and purveyors. The mere fact that such a person lives in a particular industrial area, does not mean that he knows all about it. A sociological and economic survey of the area and the people thereof is essentially necessary. Such a survey is to be conducted by sociologically trained and experienced persons.

The data collected in the course of such a survey are to constitute the basis of the programme of instruction.

A teacher in Worker's Education should do his best to teach the truth as he understands it. Suppression, misrepresentation or biased interpretation of fact thwarts the real purpose of Worker's Education. A worker too should be amenable to reasons, and be prepared to modify his pre-conceived notions in the face of facts.

An Indian Programme

A Worker's Education programme for a yet underdeveloped, but industrially growing country like India today may not be as advanced as that of the British W.E.A. and the University extra-mural department for obvious reasons. The Indian programme must start with literacy courses for the illiterate adult workers. Such courses should be designed to offer instruction in mother tongue, arithmetic, natural sciences, geography and history etc. equivalent more or less to the

four-year Primary School course. The class may last for one academic year or even more. General educational courses embracing civic education, Indian constitution, Factory and Labour laws, Health and Hygiene, Cooperation, Family Planning etc. may be conducted side by side through the well-known media of lectures, discussion-circles, group-studies and library work. Audio-visual aids—projected and non-projected—should be liberally used in workers' education. Recreative activities—indoor and outdoor games, dramatics, music and dance etc. should find an important place in the programme.

It is an established fact that a literate and trained worker responds more quickly and readily to the new technical 'know-hows' than his illiterate counterpart. An educated worker is less likely to be swayed by passions. Knowledge begets confidence and understanding and ignorance breeds distrust. Industrial disputes in very many cases originate from misunderstanding, prejudices and passion. Worker's education promotes healthy relations between the employers and the workers, and thus contributes to industrial peace.

The responsibility of providing educational and recreative amenities to the workers primarily rests with the Industry. In the interest of industry, labour and the country in general, the big or small-scale industrial employers should make adequate provision for the education and training of their workers. There is no second way.

THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES IN ADULT EDUCATION

A University is a seat of higher learning, and as such it is generally looked upon as the **finale** of the system of education starting from the Pre-Primary stage and culminating in securing the much-coveted degree. This is but a partial if not narrow concept of the real scope and functions of a University, which are so beautifully expressed in the motto of India's premier University at Calcutta: "Advancement of Learning".

In view of the pervasive and powerful impact of science and technology upon the different facets of human life—social, economic, cultural and international—it is imperative that men and women today should keep themselves abreast with all these rapid changes through a process of continuous life-long education. The Universities all over the world may undertake the special responsibility of providing sound intellectual leadership for social development. They may do so by making their teaching and research resources available for educating the adults. The Universities may also counteract all sinister forces against international amity and understanding, which are being constantly generated by political, cultural, historical and economic differences, by promoting effective 'exchange programmes', study of foreign languages, goodwill travels, cultural missions and better use of the media of mass communication etc.

Extension Courses

The role played by some of the British Universities in

maintaining and carrying out their "Extra-mural Tradition" for about two centuries is by itself an interesting subject of study. The Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London, for example, organize special courses of lectures in addition to the normal routine lectures for the so-called "students without gowns", i.e. for members of the general public. These are called 'Extension Courses'. At the outset these courses were organized to meet the growing demand for University education by two particular groups of people, namely, the industrial workers and the middle-class women, for whom in most cases Secondary Education facilities were scarce, and the Universities out of bounds.

The Tutorial Method

In the second phase of the movement the English Universities in the last part of the nineteenth century first inaugurated the national system of Technical Education. Systematic courses on Veterinary Science, Manures and Fertilizers, Dairy-making and other useful Rural crafts were organized by the Universities for the edification of the village-dwellers. The Universities also set about the important task of training Elementary Teachers. These special training courses supplied personnel to staff the Elementary Schools with. Technical education and Teacher-training were, however, short-lived phases. The English Universities next turned their attention to the dissemination of higher education amongst the industrial workers in collaboration with voluntary organizations especially the Workers' Educational Association (W.E.A.). The tutorial method was adapted to a three-year course to meet the needs of the adult working-men. The content of these courses bore direct relevance to the economic, social and political emancipation of the working people. The object was to educate the leaders of the workers, and make them fit for shouldering political responsibility in the popular democratic set-up.

All pervasive social security measures in a Welfare State usually blunt the private sector's urge for social reform. This causes a shift in interests and approach. The University Extension Programme now caters 'liberal education' through

talks, lectures and study-groups on literature, music, and art on the one hand, and subjects of professional interest on the other. The people attending the extra-mural classes are drawn from all sections—Teachers, Youth-leaders, Police Officers, Magistrates, Health workers, Child Care-takers and the like. As knowledge grows, and new horizons open up, the demand for refresher courses particularly on Science subjects increases.

Some of the Universities in India, for example, Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi and Punjab organize extension lectures for the benefit of the general public. But these lectures are, for the most part, meant for learned audiences, and seldom suited to the common man's level. Secondly, these are isolated and disconnected lectures not constituting any systematic series.

Tagore's Pioneering

Rabindranath Tagore founded Sreeniketan Rural Reconstruction Institute in 1922 as an adjunct to his famous Viswa-Bharati University. His conception of rural reconstruction was both constructive and comprehensive. All-round improvement of the villager's life mainly through self-help and cooperation was the key-note of his plan. The success of the plan as he conceived it, hinged upon proper education of the people. Tagore's Rural Reconstruction Scheme was above all educational. The Rural Institute at Sreeniketan not only organizes and conducts adult education classes, but also brings out a series of popular literature for the neo-literates and sub-literates. This series entitled "Lok Siksha Granthamala" is a pioneering venture in this particular field. The Rural Institute also offers tuition through correspondence courses to out-of-school people. The Calcutta University Students' Council for Eradication of Illiteracy carries out a programme of organizing literacy classes for the illiterate village adults. They organize village camps for this purpose during the longer vacations. Apart from the shortcomings usually inherent in youthful ebullience, the programme itself has made considerable headway in certain selected areas. More than 100 Centres are now functioning

actively in a couple of districts in West Bengal. The main drawback of such student programmes that requires to be properly guarded against, is lack of provision for adequate follow-up studies, which means production and distribution of adult literature and library service etc.

A Tentative Programme for the Universities

Having regard to the present state of affairs in so far as adult education is concerned, the Indian Universities may undertake the following four-fold programme for furtherance of adult education:

- (i) Organization of vacation camps and campaigns for removal of illiteracy with the help of the University teachers and students.
- (ii) Production of suitable graded literature for the post-literacy stage, and construction of graded vocabularies for production of such literature.
- (iii) Extension service lectures, demonstrations and visits etc. to promote higher education at a popular level.
- (iv) Correspondence courses for the benefit of the working men and people living in remote and out-of-the-way places.

The commonplace concept that the Universities are benighted intellectual 'ivory towers' for the limited few is old and anachronistic. The Universities owe it to themselves to promote education amongst the masses through the above-noted approved methods. The Extension Service or the Extra-Mural Department of a University is a practical and concrete endeavour to translate this idea into action. Higher learning needs to be socialized, and carried to the vast number of adults who have ordinarily no formal access to the precincts of the University.

The Universities in India may play a role of immediate importance in the movement for removal of mass illiteracy by organizing teachers' and students' camps during the longer recesses. Some work in this line is being done by some of

the Universities. The students' activities as adult-educators are, however, somewhat amateurish in spite of all their enthusiasm. Proper training and necessary provision for continuance of the work initiated by the campers are essentially needed to bring about enduring results.

bition and excursions etc., physical activities and sports and games.

And lastly, the Social Education Organizer is to assist the Block Development Officer in conducting the Socio-economic survey.

Constructive and Co-operative

To sum up, the role of the Social Education Organizer in the Development Block stands justified by his ability to offer constructive cooperation to the Extension Officers and their work. In the sphere of Co-operative Extension Service, the Social Education Organizer's part may be well-played in the following ways:

- (i) Disseminating and popularising the principles of cooperation through the social education centres, social education literature and audio-visual demonstrations.
- (ii) Demonstration of the practical working of the co-operative societies and exhibitions and fairs etc.
- (iii) Using the cooperative societies as agencies for conducting social education classes.
- (iv) Encouraging the formation of Cooperative Societies under the auspices of schools etc.

The Social Education Organizer by his words and deeds can, better than anyone else, carry the message of co-operation to the people, and initiate them to its proper spirit. Co-operation is not, however, a one-way traffic. The co-operative worker has also to come forward and join hands with the Social Education Organizer, and thus alone the two may make joint efforts to achieve their common objectives.

SOCIAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

Adult education was accepted as a definite responsibility of the Government during the period 1947-52. It began to be viewed as education for life and not merely the learning of the alphabet. With this change of concept new agencies of adult education came into being. Certain voluntary organisations like the Indian Adult Education Association were formed. Public men of eminence evinced interest in the adult education movement, and espoused the cause of education of the masses, particularly the rural masses. The period 1947-52, can, however, be regarded only as a beginning of the adult education movement in India. Though no spectacular results were achieved, it underlined the importance of the movement.

Post-Independence Spurt

The post-Independence era in Adult Education is characterised by a gradual emergence of the concept of Social Education. The Central Advisory Board of Education at its 14th meeting in January 1948 expressed the view that the organisation of Adult Education in India had become "imperative". A sub-committee, set up under the Chairmanship of Shri Mohanlal Saxena, recommended, inter alia, that greater emphasis should be laid on general education to enable every Indian to participate effectively in the new social order. It recommended that the Provincial Governments should provide funds for adult education. It laid down targets for the removal of 50% illiteracy in the next five years. At the 15th meeting of the Central Advisory

Concept of Welfare State

'Welfare State' and 'Socialistic pattern of Society' are expressions of comparatively recent origin. But the basic idea and principle of a 'Welfare State' are not as recent as they might seem. The idea is almost as old as history, and can be traced back to the earliest recorded account. The idea of welfare is also associated with the theory of overall state control and guardianship.

Considered from the point of view of justice, equity and people's all-round welfare, the reign of Sree Ramachandra, the hero of the great epic the 'Ramayana', is still looked upon as the model of governance. Kalidasa, the immortal Poet, in 'Raghuvansa', a poetical work of eternal fame and beauty, gives a vivid and inimitable ideal of what a welfare state stands for. In describing the high qualities of the great King Dilip, the Poet lays down the following criterion:

*Prajanam Vinayadhand Rakshanad Varanadapi,
Shaha Pita Pitarastasham Kebalam Janmahetabaha*

The King symbolises the State, not of course in the sense Louis XIV of France said about himself: "La etat ces mois—I am the State," but in the sense that the very concept of kingship was based upon the lofty principle of full devotion to the service of the people. The state was responsible for the upbringing, education, maintenance and protection of the subjects. The state was Father to the people—right from the cradle to the grave.

A modern welfare state strives to translate this abstract concept of state-fatherhood into the concrete provisions of scientifically and systematically planned social security.

From Individual Charity to Social Security

Virtues like charity and philanthropy have always been extolled by the scriptures. Acts of charity have been likened to godliness. Hindu, Christian, Islam or any other religion of the world sets special value by acts of charity and bene-

volence—hepling the poor, succouring the afflicted—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and providing shelter to the homeless. A rich man with his surplus wealth would acquire special virtue by giving away to the poor a portion of his surplus. Individual charity had ample scope to flourish in a social order, which was feudalistic, and in which property was owned by one or a few at the expense of the rest. As this order changed in course of time, and society became more democratised, and the process of socialization of property started, the scope of individual charity very naturally narrowed down. Individual charity conceded pride of place to institutional charity. Religious missions, especially the Christian Missions, partly out of altruistic motive and partly out of proselytising zeal, set up charitable endowments.

Purely philanthropic and charitable societies also took up programmes of social service, relief and rehabilitation. But as the facet of the society further changed with rapid industrialization and urbanization, even institutional charity did not seem to be enough. As in the sphere of politics and administration so also in the field of social welfare, the overall authority gradually passed into the hands of the state. With the growing complexities of life and the variety of economic and social problems following in the wake of mechanization and industrialization, charity yielded place to social justice, and social service yielded place to social security. The rich making gifts to the poor—was no longer an ideal proposition. The question was of economic equality and social justice rather than of charity. New political theories and ideologies replaced the old ones. Socialistic principles envisaging equality of rights, and equality of opportunities for the growth and development for all citizens came to be recognised all the world over. The concept of 'Welfare State' owes its origin direct from this Socialistic outlook. Political freedom and universal adult franchise are not considered complete without social and economic equality. From this arises the expediency of State provision for social amenities for all on the basis of equity and equality.

Modus Operandi

Let us now turn to the modus operandi of the welfare state. What facilities and services actually a welfare state is expected to provide for its citizens? And how are these services rendered? And what obligations are the citizens required to fulfil in return? These are some of the questions of paramount importance.

A welfare state aims at and strives for providing complete coverage, so to say, in regard to guaranteeing security to its citizens. Secondly, from birth to burial, we may use this expression in a realistic sense. Varied and comprehensive are the provisions made under the Social Security System.

Maternity Benefits

A would-be mother is entitled to special pre-natal and anti-natal care, and medical attention. Apart from maternity leave which a working woman is entitled to, there is provision for special allowances to enable her to have nourishing diet, medicine and clothes during the period of pregnancy. During child-birth the mother may be in a hospital or nursing home under proper medical care.

Child Endowment

The parent of a child is paid certain allowances during the period of the child's minority. This allowance is paid with a view to enabling the parent to bring up his/her child as a healthy and able-bodied future citizen of the State. There are countries where even today low-birth rate and sparseness of population poses a problem of first-rate importance. An attempt is made to promote population growth by providing for the upbringing of children. In case of the birth of twins or triplets or quadruplets extra allowances are paid to the parent. Such allowances continue to be paid until attainment of majority. In case of a divorce or legal separation, the court decides as to whom the child should go, and to him/her is the allowance paid.

Creche and Nursery

The working mothers leave their babies to the care of the trained matrons and nurses of the creche. Babies of the age-range 1-3 or 4 are admitted free to the creches. The creches provide all that a normal healthy home is expected to provide for its children. Nursery schools and kindergartens are an interesting and important feature of the modern educational system. Children of the age ranging from 3 to 5/6 are looked after in these institutions. The philosophy of nursery education may be briefly stated as education through joy and freedom. The child is allowed to develop on the lines of his innate genius without the fear of the teacher's rod, and the dull, grim atmosphere of the traditional class-room. The object is to help the children acquire correct habits. Unlike creches which are generally sponsored by the State or Industrial and Commercial concerns, Nurseries and Kindergartens are in most cases run as private enterprises. But nevertheless, their general popularity indicates how important a place they occupy in the educational set-up of the country.

School Education

Education is free, universal and compulsory upto a certain age. The compulsory school-age varies from country to country. In some countries it is fourteen. Somewhere it has been raised as high as 16/17. In Soviet Russia they are now contemplating to raise the compulsory education age to 18. Compulsory education covering the age-range 6 to 14 or upwards reaches the standard of Secondary Education, in some countries and even higher.

No tuition fees are charged, text-books and midday meals are supplied, free Public transport is provided for students coming from a certain distance. Education is so planned as to enable each student to proceed according to his aptitude and abilities. Educationists and Psychologists work in close partnership. They work in co-operation, and help each other in finding the right course and career for each and every student.

Apprenticeship

The educational ladder takes some, but certainly not all along the normal course to the academic finale. The majority, as is obvious, fall off earlier, and have to be especially attended to. The schools for apprenticeship and training prepare the majority for various vocations, avocations, professions and services. No-wastage-of-talent is the high-light of the educational plan.

Employment

The state assumes the full responsibility of providing employment to its citizens. Unemployment is insured against. Any worker, who not for any criminal conviction or participation in any unlawful strike, is thrown out of employment —may be for illness, physical disability or retrenchment, is paid a subsistence allowance until such time as he is suitably re-employed.

Health Insurance

Free medical service is guaranteed for one and all. This is one of the outstanding features of the Beveridge Plan of Social Security introduced in Great Britain after the Second World War. A very similar measure on a limited scale has been adopted in India for the benefit of the Industrial Workers of Bombay, Calcutta and other industrial centres. One has to get one's name registered, by payment of a nominal fee (perhaps Rs. 2/- only), and one is entitled to otherwise free medical service.

Old Age Pension

Every man on the attainment of the age of 65 and every woman on reaching the age of 60 are entitled to old age pension. This benefit is not confined to the permanent Government servants (as in India) alone but is enjoyed by all eligible citizens.

Old Men's Homes and Funeral Benefits

The Western mode of life is highly individualistic. There is no joint family system. Nor even the son or daugh-

ter on attainment of majority, and especially after marriage, continues to depend on their parents. They set up separate establishment and their family consists of the husband, the wife and may be a minor child. Old parents have to fall back on their own. Those who have no means to sustain themselves, are accommodated in the State-sponsored or local authority-sponsored 'Old Men's Homes' where free board and lodging are provided.

Even those who die without any kith and kin to perform the funeral rites, may rest assured that the State or the Church will bear the cost of the last rites and cremation.

If these benefits are open to all, a question may be posed: is there any difference of treatment in so far as the rich and the poor may be concerned? In the capitalistic countries, for example, economic disparity between the rich and the poor still persists. Without discrimination in the administration of these benefits, therefore, the very object of welfare is likely to be nullified. It should be borne in mind that as safeguard against possible misuse, a very strict "means-test" is applied in all cases of relief measures.

Summing up

Thus in brief, a welfare state today is the epitome of all that a man's life needs. Childhood, education, training, employment, health, old age and even death—come under the care and ministration of the state. The above account is but an illustrative one. There are many more benefits that are offered under the provisions of Social Security. These provisions may vary in kind and degree from country to country. But speaking generally, all the Western countries, including Soviet Russia and America, have launched upon a Security programme almost on similar lines. And the rest of the world—India in particular, has accepted this as the pattern for her would-be social and economic life.

Socialistic Pattern of State

A socialistic pattern of state is India's acclaimed goal. The implications of a Socialistic State may be summed up as follows:—

- (i) Provision of useful work for every adult on adequate wages.
- (ii) Every child and adult should have the fullest opportunity for the development of his talents and natural abilities.
- (iii) Adequate relief should be provided for disability and old age.
- (iv) Guarantee of equality for all—legal, political, economic and social.

This four-point programme does perhaps call for a little clarification. The first point, namely, provision of employment for all presupposes full development of agriculture and industries, which alone can open up channels of employment for the millions that inhabit this country. The Five-Year Plans spearhead the nation's efforts in that behalf, employment for 1 million and 2 million people being the targets of the Second and the Third Plans respectively.

The second item on the agenda means provision of universal education. The constitution of India lays down that every child in India of the age of 6 to 14 should have free education. It is satisfying to note that already considerable headway has been made in respect of spread of education during the recent years.

Regarding No. (iii)—the possibility of such benevolent measures as universal old-age pension and relief is conditioned by the strengthening of the National economy and sufficient increase in national income.

No. (iv) is already guaranteed by our constitution and various acts of Parliament. Universal adult franchise, Hindu Code Bill, and Removal of untouchability are some of the important laws to the point.

Eldorado

All this sounds very extraordinary and creates an impression that in a 'Welfare State' the people are, as if in a land of milk and honey—the heaven of happiness and comfort. The people have to do nothing, everything is provided ready-

made by that benevolent agency, the State. [But a Welfare State is no fairyland of political fancy.] A Welfare State may be very aptly likened to a beehive where every one has to work, and work very hard indeed to build up the hive and to fill it with honey. The state is the Queen Bee—the symbol that holds the people together and guides them to their destiny.

People's Obligations

A Welfare State is not a one-way traffic. The people, the recipients of the benefits, owe certain obligations to the State.

What are these duties and obligations of the people to the State? This is a pertinent question on the answer to which hinges the growth, development and fulfilment of the ideal of a Welfare State.

- (i) The citizens of the State should owe unconditional allegiance to the State. Supremacy and authority of the State are above any other sympathies or allegiance.
- (ii) The people must abide by the laws of the state—irrespective of any consideration whatsoever. Law is no respector of persons or personalities. Of course, everyone has the right to have any law changed or revoked by constitutional and lawful means.
- (iii) People must pay taxes to the State. That people have to pay heavily for all the Welfare measures is but obvious. As a matter of fact, nothing is provided free, for everything that the people get, the people have to pay in one form or another. The rich have to pay more, so that the poorer may also enjoy the benefits of citizenship of which they may be otherwise deprived.

And finally, the Welfare State aims at upraising and levelling economic and social standards by equitable distribution of the national wealth and by socialization of national production and properties.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Long before the expression Community Development came into popular parlance, Tagore pointed to the lack of contact between life and education as one of the basic causes of our social and economic backwardness. He said that the school must co-operate with the villages around it, cultivate land, breed cattle, must produce all the necessities, devising the best means, using the best materials and calling science to its aid. Similar ideas find eloquent and perhaps more practical expression in the writings and sayings of Gandhi, who first propounded the concept of work-centred basic education as a means to resurrect the dying Indian villages. Their approach to rural reconstruction was essentially an educational approach, education in the broader sense being used as an instrument for human development. It is necessary to recall what the two master minds of India of our time said and did in the field of education and rural reconstruction, not so much because their thoughts coincide with the latest educational theories and experiments, but because they provide ample food for reflection at a time when all-round development of our neglected villages is being attempted through the new method and technique of Community Development.

The Vital Role

But something vital is lacking in our Community Development Programme. The American approach to Community Development was essentially educational, unlike ours which consists primarily in providing material assistance and achieving physical targets.

Education is looked upon as a welfare or amenity aspect of the C.D. Programme, and is not equated with other compelling problems such as food-production, agriculture, industry, etc., in importance and immediacy.

The report of the Balvantrai Mehta Committee explains the relative unimportance of the educational schemes in the Community Development Programme, and sets forth their limited aim and scope.

Adult Education for Adult Franchise

The report says:

"We have a directive to provide free and compulsory education to children upto the age of 14 years within ten years of the promulgation of the Constitution. It is obvious from the progress so far made in this direction that it is not likely that the goal will be reached as directed. We, therefore, suggest that we should set for ourselves as a more modest but immediate goal the introduction of free and compulsory primary education, and to this end, steps should be taken at least in the Block areas not merely to sanction the necessary funds but to provide trained personnel in adequate numbers".

As the Constitutional directive could not be adhered to, a revised target envisaged school-coverage to at least 80% of the children of educable age by the end of the Third Plan. The age-span of such population has also been reduced to 6-11 as a more practical proposition.

But the present slow rate of progress of literacy in India as a whole, does not seem to promise a complete or near-complete solution of the problem of mass illiteracy within a foreseeable future. It is difficult to see how a people can attain full citizenship without mastering the basic skills of reading and writing. Adult franchise without adult education sounds rather paradoxical.

Block's Importance

In so far as the Block is concerned, it is evident that its budget is far too inadequate to meet the educational needs

of the people. The only alternative, therefore, seems to be to pool the departmental resources and make their best possible use through the Block agency. As an organisation the Block affords certain advantages which may be best exploited in promoting education. The Block is intended to operate in a compact area in close co-operation with the people, and the Block personnel are in a position to carry the message of education direct to them. The Balvantrai Mehta Committee also suggests that the Block should be treated as the organisational unit for effectively implementing the Primary Education Scheme.

The SEO's

The jurisdiction of the Sub-Inspector of Schools, i.e., the officer at the bottom rung of the hierarchy of educational administration should be made co-extensive with the Block, and that the two Social Education Organisers should work in co-operation with him. These recommendations envisage the establishment of a well-knit and well-manned educational administrative set-up. But it is felt that the present status of the Sub-Inspector of Schools is not likely to lend sufficient prestige to the incumbent to enable him to discharge his duties with full confidence and authority. His status needs to be upraised.

It is also suggested that the services of the two SEO's which are now utilised less for the purpose of implementing the educational schemes than for other purposes, should be used exclusively for promoting the cause of education in the Block. Opinion about the SEO's role in the Block varies between two extremes. On the one hand he is regarded as an important functionary being the liaison between the Block organisation and the village, an interpreter of the Development programme to the people. On the other hand, the SEO is looked down upon as redundant, and is derisively likened to a fifth wheel to the coach. The latter view seems to be based on a complete misunderstanding of the role of education in national development. His being in the Block organisation is to be justified by how his service may be utilized in the best possible manner.

The Job-Chart

The functions of the Social Educational Organiser carry him quite far afield. The whole gamut—from the creation of a new outlook and values to the organisation and management of literacy classes—is covered by the job-chart prescribed for him. He is expected to interpret to the people all the different schemes under the C.D. Programme, and set the stage ready for the actual enactment of this exciting drama.

There are no two opinions about the sagacity and comprehensiveness of the concept of Social Education. It would have been ideal indeed, were it possible for the SEO to perform properly all the duties assigned to him either in his job-chart or by his numerous bosses, the B.D.O., the S.D.O., the D.D.O., D.M. and the rest of the administrative and technical heads. But perhaps in our over-zealousness to achieve the ideal, we sometimes forget that the better is often the enemy of the good. Instead of attempting to have everything in our grasp we better have something, and have that in full. Education should be a first charge in our demand for national progress. Within the limited sphere of the Block, the services of the SEO's should be fully utilized in implementing the educational schemes.

U.S.S.R.'s Example

If we are not too allergic to the example and method of a totalitarian system, we might with profit examine the educational programme pursued and implemented by the USSR, and review its result for our edification.

“An illiterate people can have no Socialism, and, therefore, the first thing that they should be taught is the alphabet”, said Lenin. Two years after the October revolution of 1917, Lenin signed a decree by which men and women of Russia of certain age-range were required to learn the alphabet by a specified period. Refusal to attend literacy class was made punishable by such stringent measures as fines, forfeiture of food-cards, and expulsion from Trade Unions. It goes without saying that Lenin's decree had all

the compulsive force of dictatorial action. The educated persons irrespective of their calling and status were called upon to put in service for the liquidation of mass-illiteracy. One of the first acts of the revolutionary regime was the establishment of the Anti-illiteracy Commission. Percentage of literacy in Russia in 1919 was very much the same as in India today. It was barely 24%. But as a result of determined all-out efforts the position improved rapidly, and by the time of the out-break of the Second World War in 1939, that is, within 20 years, the overall literacy figure rose to 81%. Today illiteracy is no longer a national problem in the U.S.S.R. Literacy is not only universal, but also of an amazingly high functional standard. The phenomenal achievements of Russia in the field of science and technology is an unmistakable index of her educational progress. Efficiency of the Soviet educational system has made the other progressive countries wake up and think hard about it.

The story of mass-education in Soviet Russia makes exhilarating reading. It is of special interest and significance in view of the rapid results achieved within a comparatively short time. As a matter of national policy education and industrialization were accorded equal priority. The two advanced side by side. One without the other would have been impossible. India today wants to catch up with the rest of the progressive world, and cannot, therefore, afford to wait for a hundred years or more to reach the desired goal. Even without going in for stringent totalitarian measures which militate against India's professed ideal of democracy, it may be possible to accelerate the progress of mass-education by vigorously pushing through the Community Development Programme.

A Fit Vehicle

Here at least is an organisational set-up, an implementing machinery heretofore untried and unknown in this country which can be top-geared in speeding up the progress of education. Despite its limited budgetary provision, the Community Development Organisation as such, presents an

excellent opportunity for launching a full-scale attack upon the problem of mass-illiteracy.

In the first place the Community Development organisation operates in a compact area, and secondly, it has at its disposal the services of personnel trained in the technique of working amongst the masses. Thirdly, there is the possibility of mustering and channelizing all available resources, Governmental as well as non-governmental, and putting them to maximum use.

The Working Machinery

Taking the cue from the recommendations of the Balvantrai Mehta Committee, it may be suggested that the Block should be constituted as an educational administrative unit for the purpose of intensifying the educational drive.

Our efforts may remain confined to the sphere of primary and adult education for the present. Financial resources of the Block, being pitifully meagre, a bigger budget chunk for education on grounds of practical consideration is not peremptorily demanded. What is suggested is the pooling of the departmental resources at the Block level. What is suggested is a serious and sincere recognition of the importance of mass-education vis-a-vis national development. The Block machinery needs to be put into its full gear to implement the educational programme. Education is too important a matter for our national life to brook any delay.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL EDUCATION ORGANIZERS

A correct connotation of the expression Community Development is needed for the proper understanding of the basic philosophy of this movement. The expression is often loosely used. It is used to denote certain identity of interest as meant by expressions like business community, village community, urban community, backward community, mercantile community etc. But the precise sense in which the expression is used in connection with the Community Development Programme is: a community is a body of men living in a well-defined locality sharing common interest in its all-round progress and development and actively participating in the same. The expression Community Development Programme was first used in an Oxford University seminar sometime in 1947. The seminar discussed ways and means for the development of the educationally and economically backward areas in Africa. Due regard having had of the fact that assistance from the local Government would not be forthcoming in any appreciable measure, and that there was acute dearth of trained personnel, the ways devised and recommended were that the people themselves should be oriented and enthused to participate in implementing the development programme. People's voluntary participation constitutes the basic philosophy of the Community Development Programme.

Objectives

The objectives of the Community Development Programme are detailed as follows:

- (a) To promote all-sided development of the village community including its economic, social, political, cultural and moral development.
- (b) To develop a spirit of community life among the people by promoting cooperation, leading ultimately to voluntary community ownership of the basic means of production such as land, and sharing responsibility for the welfare, employment and livelihood of the members.
- (c) To make the villagers self-sufficient in the primary needs of life.
- (d) To develop self-reliance and individual initiative in the community so that the people themselves are able to manage their own affairs, and make the villages the self-governing units of the larger democratic state that India is. The close similarity between these objectives and those of Collective Farming and Village Soviet etc. in the U.S.S.R. deserves more than a mere passing notice.

Fundamentally Educational

The Community Development Programme is and should be primarily education-based. That the programme can never take roots, and materialise without the people's awareness and willing participation admits of no controversy whatsoever. And, therefore, Social Education was rightly declared to be the educational basis of the Community Development Programme, when it was first launched. Although there has since been some radical shift of emphasis—from education to agriculture and food production in view of the serious food position in the country—the fundamental concept still holds good. Production in any field may be stepped up only when the producer is educated and trained. Ignorance that accompanies illiteracy holds back the wheel of progress.

Social Education Organizer

The Social Education Organizer is appointed for the specific purpose of fulfilling the educational aims and objects

Board held at Allahabad a new impetus to the movement was given by Maulana Azad, the then Education Minister, who called it "Social Education" instead of adult education. The lead given by the C.A.B.E. was taken up by the Central Ministry of Education which followed it up by holding discussions with the State Governments. Conferences and seminars were organised at various places. Grants were given to the State Governments as also to certain voluntary organisations.

These were years of experimental probings to give shape and substance to the new concept of Social Education which implied a general education of adults in a developing society to enable them, as members of their communities, to work for achieving their social-economic-cultural development. Bihar tried to implement a mass literacy scheme. West Bengal, and later on Bihar, also emphasised the importance of recreational and cultural activities. Mysore, through its State Adult Education Council, kept close to the original concept that literacy was the core of adult education, but encouraged folk arts as instruments of popular renaissance. Delhi, by its "Education Caravans", relied on the lure of audio-visual aids to attract people to Social Education. Bombay also kept close to the literacy programme. Madras instituted a fairly sound system of public libraries. Madhya Pradesh and the Etawah project of U.P., through their programmes of Social Education, attempted an all-round development of the rural masses without ignoring illiteracy. The Etawah project concentrated on those issues that were directly relevant to economic development.

The First Plan

Social Education found a place in the First Five-Year Plan with a provision of Rs. 5 crores for organizing literacy classes, community centres, libraries and Janata Colleges. It was also made an integral part of the Community Development Programme defined as "Community uplift through Community action." Social Education included literacy drives, establishment of libraries, cultural and recreational programmes, organisation of exhibitions, youth activities,

radio-groups, community centres and women's welfare. Two Social Education organisers (one man and one woman) were appointed in each Development Block to take charge of this work. Besides, the State Governments took up certain other schemes with the assistance of the Government of India, e.g. development of School-cum-Community Centres, intensive educational development (which included 5 model Community Centres, Library service and Janata Colleges) and the establishment of State and District libraries.

During the First Plan 55 lakhs of adults were enrolled in the adult literacy classes run by the State Education Departments, and 12 lakhs in the classes run by the Development Departments in the various Blocks. Out of these 35 lakhs are estimated to have attained literacy.

63,000 Literacy Centres, 454 school-cum-community centres and 55,000 youth clubs were established during the period. One hundred District Libraries were set up. There were nearly 32,000 public subscription libraries in the country, the majority in the rural areas. Besides, five Social Education Organiser's Training Centres were established for the training of the S.E.O.s.

The Second Plan

In the Second Five-Year Plan again, a provision of Rs. 5 crores was made for the Social Education schemes. An amount of Rs. 10 crores was also provided for this item under the programme for Community Development. In addition to the five Social Education Organiser's Training Centres set up during the First Plan, 8 more such Centres were started. The Ministry of Education organised the National Fundamental Education Centre in New Delhi to train District-level officers for Social Education. A Library Institute was set up under the auspices of Delhi University in 1958 for the training of librarians for public libraries in the country.

In the context of the enlarged concept of Social education, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting also took up the production of documentaries, and the use of radio as a medium of mass-education. Rural broadcasts were improved

in regard to their educational quality, and community listening sets were provided in larger numbers. Many States set up their Film Libraries, and the Ministry of Education built up the Central Film Library. Several Ministries and Organisations prepared posters for educating the masses on subjects within their purview. The use of film-strips also became more and more popular.

Production of suitable literature for the neo-literate adults was not overlooked. The Mysore State Adult Education Council, the Bombay City Social Education Committee, the Jamia Millia, Delhi, the West Bengal, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh Governments and the Union Territory of Delhi brought out such literature. The Ministry of Education also developed its own programme for the production of such literature. It sponsored Literary Workshops for training the writers of books for neo-literates, and instituted prize schemes for encouraging production of such literature.

Through its schemes in the First and Second Plans, the Ministry of Education encouraged the growth of libraries, especially the State and District Libraries, and initiated the "Integrated Library Service" in some States.

Some of the other main schemes sponsored by the Central and the State Governments are described briefly as follows:—

National Fundamental Education Centre

This Centre was set up in 1956 to serve as a national centre for Social Education research and studies. Its objectives are to conduct research and evaluation, to train key personnel, to conduct experiments in the production of better type of equipment and materials and to act as a clearing house of ideas and information pertaining to Social Education.

Production of Literature for Neo-literates

Under this scheme the Ministry of Education awarded prizes to the authors of the best books for neo-literates in different languages and organised 'Sahitya Rachnalayas' in different parts of the country for training authors in the

technique of writing for the neo-literates. The Ministry also sponsored the publication of various books.

Other Schemes

So far as the other schemes, such as the Institute for the training of Librarians, and the Institute for Workers' Education are concerned, it is too early to make any assessment of their impact on the comprehensive programme of Social Education. The Institute of Library Science was established in Delhi University in March 1959, and the Institute for Workers' Education at Indore in November 1960.

The State Schemes

The main items included in the State schemes of the Education Departments are:

- (a) Social Education Centres
- (b) Production of Literature
- (c) Library Service
- (d) Audio-Visual Aids.

On a scrutiny of the progress of the various schemes during the Second Plan period, it appears that about half the States utilised less than 50% of the provision made for Social Education. The shortfall is generally high in the case of States with low percentage of literacy, as will be evident from the table given below:

(Rs. in lakhs)						
Sl. No.	State	Literacy Percentage, 1961	Provision	Expenditure	Percentage : Shortfall	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	
1.	Andhra Pradesh ...	20.8	21.30	15.22	28.6	
2.	Assam ...	25.8	4.75	4.49	0.54	
3.	Bihar ...	18.2	54.56	14.75	73.0	
4.	Gujarat ...	30.3	12.74	9.29	27.1	
5.	Jammu & Kashmir	10.7	5.80	1.98	65.8	
6.	Kerala ...	46.2	25.20	11.89	52.8	
7.	Madhya Pradesh ...	16.9	48.62	12.76	73.8	
8.	Madras ...	30.2	2.37	23.36	<i>Excess</i>	

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
9. Maharashtra	...	29.7	25.50	10.51	58.8
10. Mysore	...	25.3	—	4.51	—
11. Orissa	...	21.5	17.37	12.02	30.8
12. Punjab	...	23.6	25.50	10.64	58.3
13. Rajasthan	...	14.7	37.80	8.00	78.8
14. Uttar Pradesh	...	17.5	13.98	11.99	14.2
15. West Bengal	...	29.1	55.65	99.40	<i>Excess</i>
Union Territories :					
1. Andaman & Nicobar Islands	—	1.00	0.46	54.0	
2. Delhi	...	51.00	10.06	3.97	60.5
3. Himachal Pradesh	14.6	9.67	6.92	28.4	
4. Manipur	...	2.58	1.51	41.50	
5. Tripura	...	3.03	3.19	—	
6. Pondicherry	...	0.50	0.15	70.0	
7. L. M. & A. Islands	—	1.00	0.43	57.0	
Total (All India)	21.5	378.98	267.44	29.43	

Work by other Agencies

Besides the Ministry of Education and the State Education Departments, Social Education (including adult literacy) is undertaken also by the State Development and Planning Departments in accordance with the schemes drawn up by the Ministry of Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Cooperation. Separate programmes are worked out by the Ministry of Defence for the Indian Army. The Central Social Welfare Board and the Coal Mines Welfare Organisation of the Ministry of Labour and Employment have their own programmes. Some voluntary organisations actively participate in the programme with or without assistance from the Government.

Social Education in Development Blocks

Every Community Development Block has a provision of Rs. 70,000 for Stage I and Rs. 50,000 for Stage II. This provision is earmarked for various items of the programme, including Social Education. The programme of Social Education in the Blocks includes organization of Community Centres, Youth Clubs, Mahila Mandals, Adult Literacy Centres, Farmers' Groups, Recreation Centres and the train-

ing of 'Gram Sahayakas'. The programme also includes the training of leadership through participation in various educational activities.

Each Block, on an average, covers a population of 66,000. During the year 1960-61, there were 3,137 Blocks. An expenditure of Rs. 200 lakhs was incurred on Social Education work by the Ministry of Community Development during the First Five-Year Plan. The total number of classes started during this period was 41,000 and the number of adults made literate was 10 lakhs.

During the Second Plan a total expenditure of Rs. 985 lakhs was incurred, and 1,62,600 Literacy classes were started. 40,54,530 adults are reported to have been made literate. The position regarding other schemes of Social Education indicates that during the last year of the Second Five-Year Plan (1960-61) there were 43,294 adult literacy centres and 7,40,110 adults were made literate; 15,326 reading rooms were running; 41,211 youth clubs had 8,95,700 members; 18,487 'mahila mandals' had 2,63,800 members.

The Central Social Welfare Board

The Central Social Welfare Advisory Board generally assists in the development and improvement of social welfare activities of various types with the help of the State Social Welfare Advisory Boards set up by the State Governments in consultation with the CSWB. Financial assistance is given to voluntary welfare organisations undertaking such activities. It conducts programmes for the welfare of women and children, including the running of Welfare Extension Projects. The activities of these projects include 'Balwadis', 'Mahila Mandals' and Health Services. Literacy classes and cultural and recreational programmes form an important part of the programme of the 'Mahila Mandals'.

Coal Mines Welfare Organisation

The activities of this organisation include (a) maintaining public health; (b) educational and recreational activities; (c) water supply; (d) other amenities. These activi-

ties are centred round the various institutions run by the Coal Mines Welfare Organisation, Dhanbad.

Army Education

The Indian Army is the largest single organisation in the country for adult education. The education of the soldier begins from the day he joins the Army, and continues till his retirement. Army education is thought of as a process of awakening and cultivating the moral, mental and intellectual qualities of a soldier.

Education in the Army is the responsibility of the Army Educational Corps which functions under the over-all control of the Military Training Directorate at the Army Headquarters.

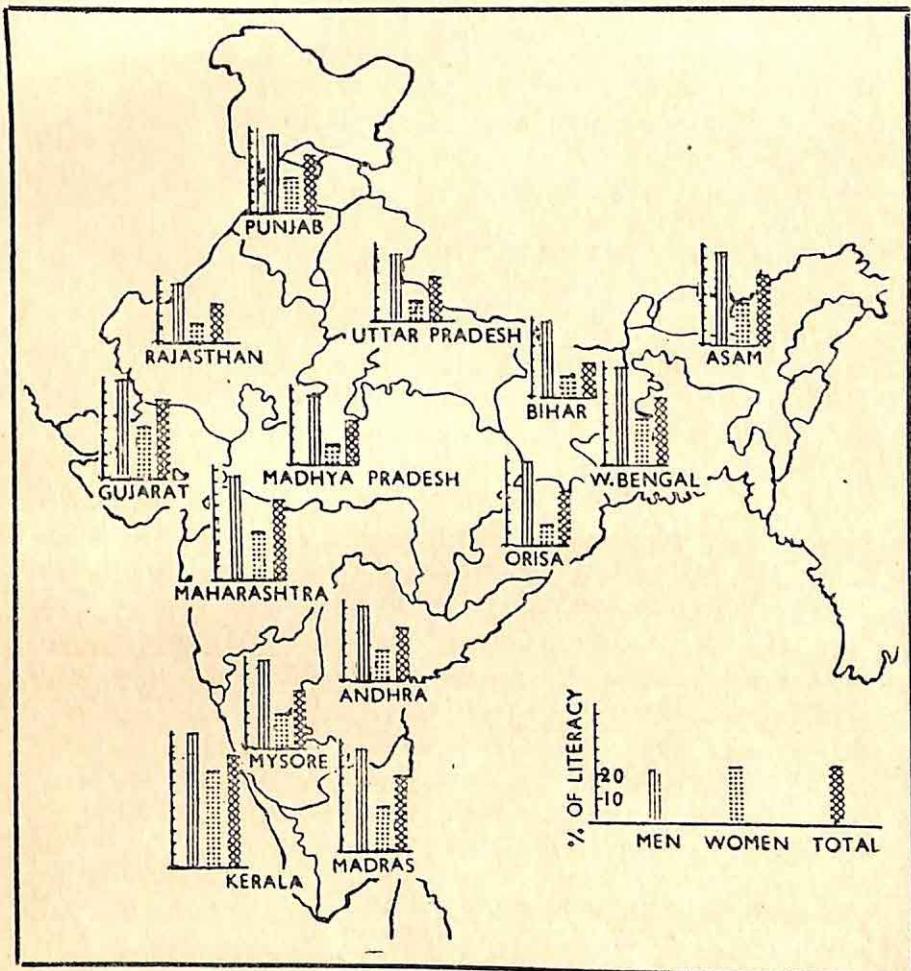
Education in the Army is imparted in five progressive stages. Examinations are held at the end of each stage and a certificate is awarded. The medium of instruction is Hindi in Devnagari script for the first four certificates and English for the last one. These certificates are recognised as equivalent to the civil standards by the Central and State Governments, the various Boards and Universities are helpful to the soldier for re-employment in civil life after he is released from the Army.

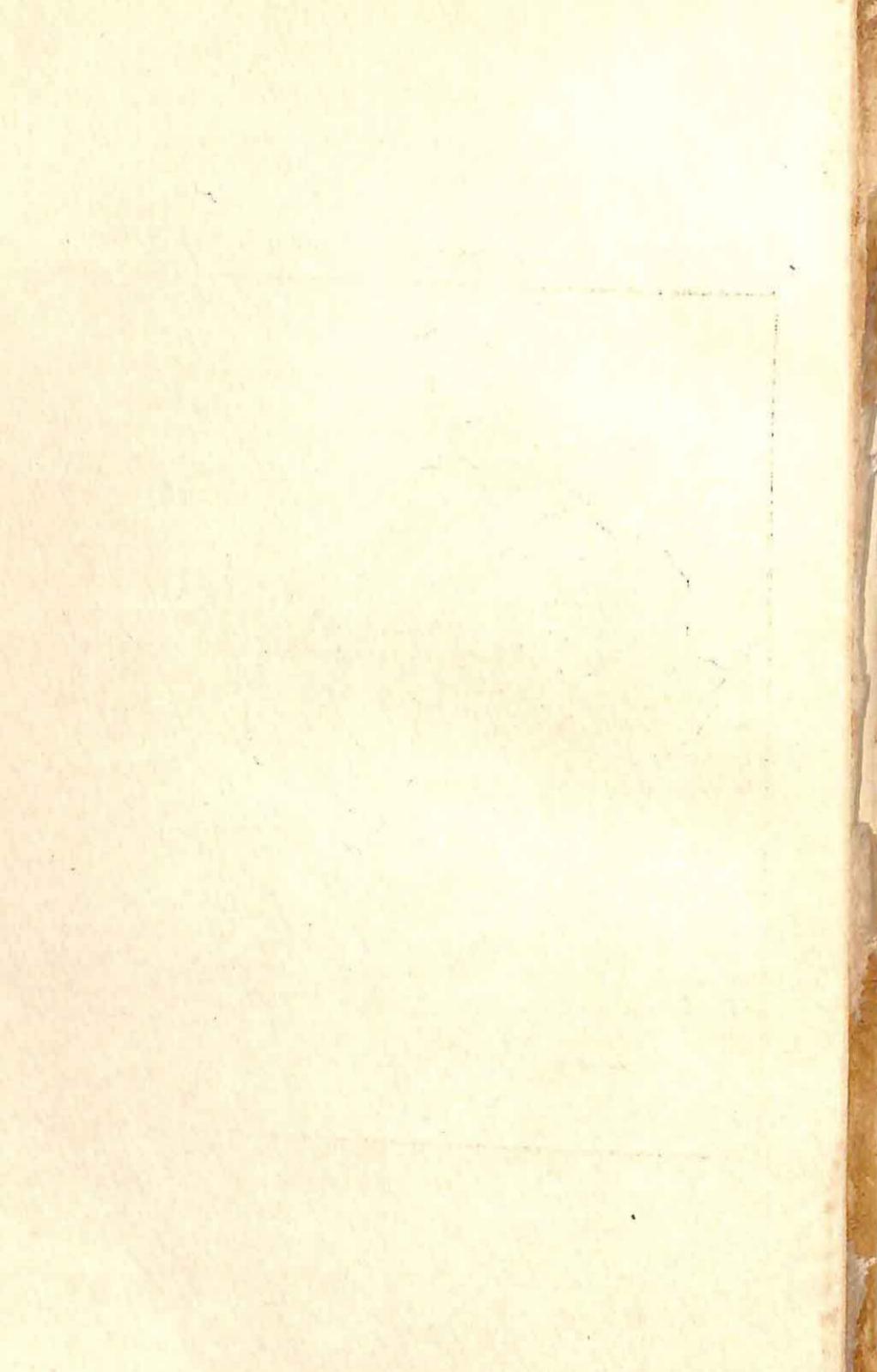
There is a vast net-work of libraries and reading rooms in the various Centres. Special provision of literature for field education is an important feature of the education activities in the Army. Equal emphasis is given to co-curricular activities including group discussions, debates, lectures, dramas, plays, training in hobbies and handicrafts, visits to places of historical and industrial interest.

Voluntary Organisations

In addition to governmental organisations, there are various semi-voluntary and voluntary organisations working in the field of social education, such as the Mysore State Adult Education Council, the Bombay City Social Education Committee, the Indian Adult Education Association, Delhi, Literacy House, Lucknow, the West Bengal Adult

A Literacy Map of India (1961)





Education Association, the Ramakrishna Mission, and Sreeniketan Rural Reconstruction Institute, West Bengal.

The Third Plan made a total provision of about Rs. 25 crores—about Rs. 92 lakhs at the Centre, Rs. 540 lakhs in the States and an estimated allotment of Rs. 19 crores for Social Education under the Community Development programme.

The measure of progress in the development of community centres, reading rooms in villages, organisation of youth-groups, 'mahila mandals', village panchayats and the co-operatives has been appreciable. But one aspect of Social Education, and in some ways the most important, has not been satisfactory. Between 1951-61, literacy percentage has increased only from about 17 to about 24. The introduction of the Panchayati Raj at the district and block levels and the important role assigned to village panchayats render it imperative that in as short a period as possible, a substantial proportion of the adult population should become capable of reading and writing. This is essential in their own interest as in the interest of the community as a whole.

The modus-operandi suggested in the Third Plan was as follows:

Any large-scale and effective programme for adult literacy must be based on the closest possible co-operation at every level of personnel engaged in education and in community development. It will call for a pooling of the available resources in men and money, mobilisation of voluntary workers and organisations and development of adult education and literacy work at the Block and village levels, and in every city and town, so that it takes the character more and more of a popular movement. Social Education and adult literacy have to be developed as extension activities undertaken by the educational institutions, specially village schools in collaboration with the panchayats and co-operatives and voluntary organisations. The broad aim should be that wherever a group of persons sufficient to constitute a class desires to acquire literacy, necessary facilities in the shape of teachers and teaching materials should be made

readily available. Every educational institution should be involved in this effort, and individual teachers participating in it should be given suitable honoraria. At the same time, the village panchayat and other agencies should make their due contribution towards the effort. While the Social Education Organisers, Block Education Officers and individual educational institutions should work closely together to place the facilities needed at the service of the local communities, it will be primarily the duty of the Panchayat Samitis, village Panchayats and the Voluntary organisations to create and maintain popular enthusiasm and develop adult education and literacy on a continuing basis in a manner related organically to their own needs and conditions. At every step, the local leadership, the teachers and the voluntary workers should be drawn into the movement for the expansion of literacy both among men and women.

The Administrative Set-up in the States

Except in the case of a few States, Social Education is the joint responsibility of the Education and Planning/Development Departments. In Madhya Pradesh, the Panchayats and Social Welfare Department take care of this programme. In Jammu and Kashmir, the Community Development Department is responsible for implementing it.

There are, however, variations in emphasis and status given to this subject. In Andhra Pradesh, Mysore and Madras, Social Education is dealt with at the state level by the officers who deal with general education. In other States, the D.P.I./D.E.'s offices have a separate officer dealing with Social Education. Assam has a State Social Education Officer; Bihar a Joint Director; Rajasthan a Deputy Director; Maharashtra an Officer on Special Duty; Punjab a Youth Welfare Officer and West Bengal a Chief Inspector, and Uttar Pradesh an Education Expansion Officer, to deal with Social Education exclusively.

In certain States, there are officers at the divisional level to look after Social Education. Kerala has a Social Education Officer each for 3 districts and Punjab has 4 Circle Social Education Officers.

At the district level also the position differs from State to State. While in the majority of States Social Education is the responsibility of the District Educational Inspectors in addition to general education, some states have appointed District Social Education Officers. These States are Assam, Bihar, Madras, Mysore (in certain districts only), Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Punjab does not have any officer at the district level. The Circle Social Education Officers are responsible for the work in their respective circles.

A similar position exists at the lower Block/Taluka level. Social Education Organisers, who are under the Planning and Development Department, function at the Block level in most of the States. In West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Assam and Maharashtra, the S.E.O.s. are under the joint control of the Education Department and the Development Department.

SOCIAL EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL

Time and again isolated and sporadic efforts had been made here and there to remove mass-illiteracy by organising night schools and adult education classes, but there being no definite purpose, planning or imagination at their back, these isolated and individual efforts in most cases proved short-lived and fruitless. The following factors mainly account for the failure of these efforts:—

- (i) Absence of any State planning, support and patronage.
- (ii) Scarcity of devoted and trained workers.
- (iii) Public apathy and indifference.

It is not until 1936 that any large-scale measures with Governmental support had been launched for the eradication of mass-illiteracy. With the coming of the Congress ministries to power in several provinces, comprehensive schemes with necessary budget provisions to finance them were not only formulated but also put into operation. The most notable efforts in this direction were the mass-literacy campaigns in Bihar, the Punjab and Bombay. With the Congress withdrawing from the Councils not long afterwards, the adult education programme launched by the Congress Ministries was also unceremoniously shelved.

In Bengal too, considerable interest and activities in adult education were witnessed about the years 1936-37. The movement chiefly owed its origin to the National War Front in collaboration with which a voluntary organisation

known as the Bengal Adult Education Association did a good deal of spade work in this direction. Making good use of the experiences and experiments of Dr. F. C. Laubach, the well-known literacy expert, this Association brought out a number of illustrated primers, readers and charts for use in the adult education classes. The then Muslim League Ministry of Bengal also adopted a scheme for rural reconstruction, one of the main objects of which was to organise night classes for illiterate adult villagers. The services of the temporary staff employed by the Government in the Department of Jute Regulation and Rural Reconstruction and of the village Sub-Registrars were utilised for this purpose. A number of individual Subdivisional Officers, Circle Officers, education Inspecting Officers and teachers showed considerable enterprise in organising adult education centres. From a draft report prepared by the Committee on Adult Education appointed in 1938 by the Government of Bengal, it appears that in the subdivision of Serajgunj alone, there were as many as 2,000 adult education centres with over a lakh of pupils during 1937-38, and in the whole of Bengal there were at that time some 8,000 adult literacy classes with an approximate enrolment of over 150,000. Useful and continuous work was done at Sriniketan under the auspices of Viswa-Bharati. A distinguishing feature of the rural reconstruction programme of Viswa-Bharati was its attempt at bringing about all-round improvement in the life of the villagers including betterment of health and sanitation, economic regeneration and development of co-operative enterprises with the object of solving some of the outstanding rural problems.

Attempts were also made to induce the college students to devote their long vacations to voluntary adult education work. The Social Service Section of the Calcutta University Institute organised special training camps for student volunteers to work in the villages. But unfortunately, due to lack of financial support from the Government and proper control and co-ordination, such attempts proved abortive in most cases. Relapse into illiteracy was also unavoidable as there was no well-laid plan for continuation work.

The New Beginning

With the dawn of Independence in India her history of education also entered upon a new phase. Appalling mass-illiteracy to the tune of 80 per cent of the total population is absolutely inconsistent with the idea of democracy which is the avowed objective of the Indian Constitution. The urgent need for education was at once realised and the newly-formed national Government set about the task of fighting mass-illiteracy and ignorance in right earnest. The first ostensible indication of this new move on the part of the West Bengal Government was the provision of a sum of Rs. 5,00,000 for adult education in the budget for 1948-49.

Although there was no detailed and accurate information about the state of adult education in West Bengal immediately after partition, it was roughly estimated that in 1947 there were 412 privately-managed night schools in the State with an enrolment of 12,256. The expenditure in these schools amounted to Rs. 26,215, of which the greater part was raised as public subscriptions and contributions by the District and Municipal Boards. The only institution managed by the Government was the Prison School in Midnapore Central Jail. It employed four convict teachers with short training to impart lessons on the 3 R's to about 250 convict pupils.

West Bengal Adult Education Committee

In terms of the Government Resolution No. 2136Edn., dated the 18th June 1948, a Committee under the Chairmanship of the 'eminent lawyer litterateur Atul Chandra Gupta, and consisting of the Secretary, Education Department, the Director of Public Instruction and several well-known experts and educationists was appointed to go into the problems of adult education in West Bengal and advise the Government in regard to the lines on which such education should be promoted, the methods to be pursued and the organisation and administrative machinery to be set up in this connection with a view to a speedy and effective solution of the problem.

After a detailed and careful examination of the different

aspects of the problem of adult education, the Committee indicated its three essential phases as follows:—

- (a) To make the illiterate adults literate and during the time this is done to impart such elementary knowledge as is essential and practicable.
- (b) To ensure that those made literate do not lapse back into illiteracy.
- (c) To organise informative and cultural education with visual and auditory aids now available by arranging discourses for pure joy—fostering folk amusement both on familiar and novel lines.

The Committee drew up a detailed syllabus on the subjects to be taught either formally or informally in the adult education classes and recommended that an adequate administrative and supervisory staff should be employed to implement the scheme.

The Government generally accepted the Committee's recommendations and took necessary steps for their implementation.

Training of Teachers

In pursuance of the recommendations of the Committee, the Government first organised a specialised training course for the would-be teachers of the adult education centres. Pau-
city of such workers as would be willing to carry on adult education work either voluntarily or on a modest remuneration and the fact that such part-time and unremunerative social work can be best undertaken by local people only, led the Government to decide that teachers of the rural primary and other types of schools should, at first, be pressed into service, for this purpose.

In 1950 the members of the District staff appointed by the Government to implement the scheme for Social Education underwent similar training at the Government Basic Training College, Banipur, where a short and intensive adult education course was organised with the help of the college staff and several outside lecturers and demonstrators.

The District Officers in their turn organised training camps in their respective districts for the benefit of the field-workers. The officers' training camp at Banipur was followed up by three district camps at Bankura, Howrah and Santiniketan (Birbhum) in which about 200 field-workers including women received short-course training.

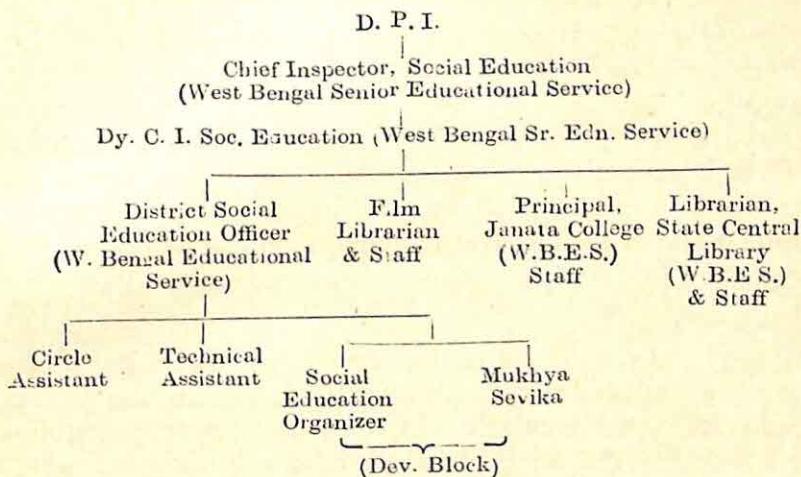
Advisory and Administrative Set-up

In terms of the recommendations of the Adult Education Committee, the Government set up a State Advisory Board consisting of distinguished educationists and experts to advise it on matters relating to the promotion of adult education in West Bengal. The Hon'ble Minister for Education acted as Chairman of the Board.

In each district again, a District Social Education Advisory Council consisting of the District Magistrate as Chairman, the District Social Education Officer as Secretary and educationists and social workers of the district was set up under special orders of the Government. The duty of this Council is not only to tender advice to the District Social Education staff but also to recommend measures for the expansion of social education in the district and to distribute Government grants and subsidies to the various libraries and folk recreational institutions with a view to stimulating their social education activities.

A smaller committee called the local Adult Education Committee is also there in each village or township where an adult education centre is at work. Composed of four or five leading persons of the locality including the worker-in-charge of the adult education centre, this Committee is to organise and conduct the activities of the Centre by recruiting adult pupils, holding literacy tests and by popularising education through propaganda and personal contact.

A special administrative staff attached to the Education Directorate has also been sanctioned by the Government. The present Social Education administrative set-up in West Bengal is as follows:—



The Film Library

A Film Library with a miniature projection hall with sitting accommodation for about fifty persons is used for regular weekly exhibition of educational films for social education workers and students of Calcutta Schools and Colleges.

The Film Library also serves as a meeting place for experts and field-workers for discussions and seminar study. The Film Library maintains a store of 16 m.m. educational films. The films are circulated free to the members and other applicants for the purpose of demonstration. A mobile unit arranges film shows in educational institutions in and around Calcutta.

Audio-visual equipment, such as, radio sets, epidiascopes and 16 m.m. film projectors, etc., have been purchased. The total expenditure incurred in this connection amounted to Rs. 4,17,000 (in round figures).

Twenty mobile units for organising educational film-shows in outlying rural areas have also been set up.

Services of Voluntary Organisations

Long before the Government formally took up the work of social education, some well-known public welfare organisa-

tions, such as, Ramkrishna Mission, Viswa-Bharati Rural Reconstruction Institute, Sriniketan, Bengal Bratachari Society and Nari Siksha Samiti had already been actively engaged in the task of spreading education amongst the masses. These organisations follow varied and interesting programmes covering *inter alia* adult literacy, improvement of health and sanitation, economic regeneration of villages, revival of indigenous folk art and music, social and cultural education, etc.

The Government fully appreciate the value of their services and co-ordinate their activities through a well-knit plan for the elimination of wide-spread mass-illiteracy and propagation of social education in the broader sense. The Government, in the first instance, helped these organisations with grants for the purchase of equipment for the expansion of their mass-education activities, and subsidise their adult education centres with regular recurring grants.

Literacy and Complete Adult Education Centres

In a country with a big population of which about 80 per cent is illiterate, the urgency of a determined and vigorous literacy drive needs no special pleading. But it is not enough to face the vast and complex problem of adult education on the literacy front alone. The following extract from the report of the Central Advisory Board of Education makes the position perfectly clear:—

“Adult Education has sometimes been described as a compensatory measure in the sense that it is an attempt to give adults a belated chance to make up for the opportunities which were denied to them in their youth. But its proper function is a broader and deeper one. It should aim at giving effect to the democratic principles of continuous, lifelong and complete education for all according to their ability to profit by it. In other words, the role of adult education is to make every possible member of the State an effective and efficient citizen and thus to give reality to the ideal of democracy”.

The West Bengal scheme has in view the establishment of full-fledged community centres in the villages, the purpose of which will be not only to impart social, civic and cultural education to the villagers but also to afford opportunities to every member of the community for participation in wholesome recreational, co-operative and welfare activities. As a first step two types of adult education centres have now been started namely, (1) literacy centres and (2) complete centres.

These centres are attached either to a Primary, Middle or High School or to a public library or some other educational institution. A literacy centre is conducted by one teacher, usually a member of the tutorial staff of the host institution. Although the main function of a literacy instructor is to give lessons in 3 R's, he is also required to spend some portion of his time in giving simple oral lessons in History, Geography, Civics, Health and Hygiene, etc.

A complete centre on the other hand is conducted by two teachers. There is a literacy instructor as also a social education teacher. The duties of the latter consist in giving talks and discourses and organizing demonstrations and community activities.

Conditions permitting, a social education teacher attached to a particular complete centre, has sometimes to go round four to five contiguous literacy centres and supplement the work of the literacy instructors.

Folk Recreational Institutions

From time immemorial, the perennial influence of Indian culture used to be widely disseminated through a number of popular media such as 'Kathakata', 'Kirtan', music, drama, dance, art and painting, etc. Great indeed was the moral and educational influence of these institutions upon the mass mind. The two immortal classics, the 'Ramayana' and the 'Mahabharata', the great teachings of which used to be widely propagated in numberless ways—readings, recitals, songs and dramas, etc., held a sublime sway over the public mind. The impact of the new forms of public amusement such as the

cinema and the radio has also been great, but not always to the best of our social and national interest. The cinema in particular, which now holds the field, has introduced certain foreign standards and values, the effect of which on the public mind cannot always be regarded as healthy and desirable. The traditional and indigenous type of entertainment is gradually losing in popularity under the impact of modern amusements. Many of our age-old indigenous arts of highly intrinsic merit are fast dying out.

The Social Education Scheme gives financial assistance to the indigenous folk recreational institutions such as 'jatra', 'kathakata', 'kirtan', 'tarja', 'kavigan', 'gambhira', folk songs and dances, etc. The idea is to encourage the composers and performers to produce and present really good stuff of entertainment and educative value.

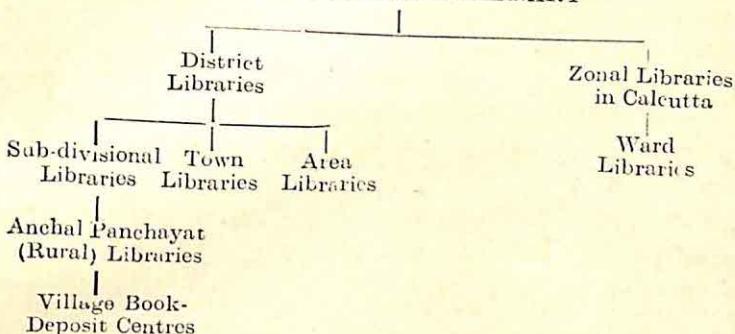
In West Bengal, at present over 6000 Social Education Centres operate under the aegis of the Education Department, Agricultural and Community Development, Department and voluntary organisations. Total adult enrolment in a year is nearly 3 lakhs, and about a lakh of people attain literacy. A new project drawn up after the 'Maharashtra Mohim' scheme has been launched in West Bengal recently. The scheme is to be implemented by the Anchal Panchayats and the Gram Sabhas with the help of local volunteers, the Government supplying only books, and reading materials.

The State Plan, amongst other things, undertakes the publication of suitable literature for the adult beginners and the neo-literates. Patronage in the shape of bulk-purchase is also offered to suitable market publications.

Library Service

A noteworthy feature of the State Social Education Plan is the development and expansion of Public Library Service. On the following page is a tabular representation of the Public Library set-up in West Bengal. Grants for books, equipment and furniture etc. are also made to over 1000 subscription libraries every year.

STATE CENTRAL LIBRARY



Adult Schools

Another interesting and popular feature of the Social Education Scheme in West Bengal is the Adult School. Twenty-eight Adult Schools providing instruction upto the School Final standard have been functioning successfully. These schools offer galloping courses compressing six academic years into four. People, whose school education had been interrupted due to socio-economic reasons, and also working people who want to improve their academic qualifications attend these schools in their off-time. The classes are held in the premises of recognised High and Higher Secondary schools outside the normal school-hours. The members of the tutorial staff of the parent school teach the adults, for which they are paid by the Government. The Adult school is entirely financed by the Government. Keen demand for admission into the Adult Schools points to their general usefulness and popularity. Many students on completion of the four-year course sit for the School Final Examination as private candidates. The percentage of pass is pretty satisfactory.

THE MAHARASHTRA MOHIM

The word 'Mohim' in Marathi means campaign.

The previous history of the Social Education movement in Maharashtra State aimed at making the illiterate adults literate without rousing the general consciousness of the community. Stray classes were organised by individual social workers to impart literacy and general education to the few illiterates, who could be enrolled in these classes. The adults who were persuaded to join the classes generally realised the need for literacy in modern life, and were genuinely interested in getting some knowledge. They were supplied with new books and slates, and usually all these classes began with a good deal of enthusiasm. But in a large number of cases this enthusiasm could not be retained.

Individual and Isolated Efforts

While a few illiterate adults joined the classes, by far the larger number of them remained outside. If they were not positively hostile to these classes, they were at best indifferent or apathetic. This atmosphere of general apathy largely thwarted the success of the classes.

The survey made of the Social Education movement up to the year 1961, clearly shows that stray and isolated literacy classes cannot contribute effectively to the eradication of illiteracy from the masses. Such classes run by individual workers without the general and conscious support of the community are doomed to failure. The classes run in isolation do not create the necessary congenial atmosphere in the village which alone can face the opposition of the majority

of illiterate adults, who do not attend the literacy classes. Without the support of the people and their leaders and the officers in the villages the social workers will be fighting a losing battle all the time.

Consciousness of the Community

The central problem of Social Education is, therefore, to rouse the consciousness of the village community. Every one in the village must realise that illiteracy is a shameful slur and disgrace to the community.

It is realisation of the need to foster the spirit of oneness and unity in the village and to awaken it to take joint action for development that has led to the birth of Gram Shikshan Mohim.

The events described so far pointed to the need for creating the necessary atmosphere of oneness, unity and purpose in the village community. It was felt that teachers should gather together frequently in order to discuss their work, exchange notes and hold discussions with a view to having a few inspiring ideas to take back to their work. Every month teachers in a particular group would meet in a 'shibir' for $1\frac{1}{2}$ days, and the occasion immediately galvanised the village people, who under the leadership of local teachers made all arrangements to receive their guests, who with their officers and educationists and other prominent people from the surrounding areas organised exhibitions, and held discussions on the topics which were of great importance in the day-to-day teaching in the class-room. These 'shibirs' were organised on practically 'no cost to Government' basis as the teachers brought their own food and were provided with free accommodation by the hosts.

It was soon realised that the organisation of such 'shibirs' and other social functions in the village needed a band of social workers. It is important to bear in mind that the movement of scouting is a natural hand-maid and ally of the Social Education movement because the primary aim of both the movements is to create and foster a spirit of social service and sacrifice among the young folk. It is the creation of

this spirit and this atmosphere that leads to success both in Social Education and general development.

The 'Mohim' Method

Having created the necessary atmosphere in the villages of the district, wall-posters and appeals were printed and sent to the various villages in the districts. The importance of the literacy programme was explained to the Sub-Inspecting Officers, and they were urged to take a special interest in the programme. Special charts and booklets for use in the literacy classes were prepared. Propaganda meetings at the centrally situated places in different 'talukas' of the district were organised. Efforts were made to secure the co-operation of all officers and local village leaders in order to create and maintain enthusiasm for the literacy programme. Teachers and social workers were specially commissioned to start classes for this purpose. The enthusiasm caught on, and even women who were accustomed to 'Purdah', began to shed their shyness and take greater and continuous interest in literacy lessons. In the previous years, the number of neo-literates did not exceed 3,000 per year. But in 1958-59 it jumped to 10,000 and in 1959-60, it reached 21,000. Out of the latter figure, 11,000 were women, and two villages had achieved cent per cent literacy. This spectacular result was primarily due to the change of approach to the problem and the method of direct appeal to the people to solve it.

An appeal was addressed to all the villagers to do the following things:—

- (i) To prepare village-wise lists of illiterate adults by taking an actual census from house to house;
- (ii) To select Social Education workers for conducting literacy classes in the village;
- (iii) To allot a specific number of illiterate adults to each Social Education worker;
- (iv) To ensure that the Village Panchayat supplies Kerosene for lighting arrangements for the classes;
- (v) To open library-cum-reading rooms in the villages for the neo-literates;

(vi) To start home classes for adult women with the help of boys and girls studying in the upper primary classes.

After about two months the adults could read fluently and write simple sentences and do sums. They had also acquired a fair amount of general knowledge. A suggestion then came from the women that a general meeting called "Gram Gaurav Samaramva" should be held with an eminent person as the President. They could organise some singing and speeches by the neo-literates and the President, an eminent educationist, or public worker could give them some advice and words of encouragement. This suggestion was implemented and it was a great success.

Gram Gaurav Samaramva

At the Gram Gaurav Samaramva the adults (men and women) were publicly tested in their knowledge of reading and writing. This was to convince everybody that the attainment is genuine. After this testing the solemn ceremony of lighting the lamps, a symbolic act to express the dawn of enlightenment took place. First the Chief Guest, then the Inspecting Officer and then the Headmaster of the school lit their lamps. And all the neo-literates stood up and took the following oath:—

"In the name of the village deity we solemnly swear that we shall keep up literacy, send our children to school regularly and give them adequate education, increase our agriculture produce, maintain the unity of the village and achieve all-sided development".

The villages were not allowed to organise the Samaramva unless in addition to the attainment of cent per cent literacy, they had achieved complete cleanliness of its streets, wells, buildings, etc. The movement gave a fillip to such activities as organization of village libraries and reading rooms, farmers' clubs, radio farm forums, co-operative societies, mahila mandals, youth clubs, etc. and production of wall-newspapers and posters.

In 1960-61, the number of illiterate adults made literate rose to as high a figure as 1,09,000.

ADULT EDUCATION IN BRITAIN

Mass illiteracy is no more a problem in Britain. Compulsory school attendance upto the age of 15 has for all practical purposes made illiteracy non-existent. Isolated but not too uncommon cases of relapse do not pose any cognizably mass scale problem. These are specific problems to be specifically treated.

Variety of Interests

Everyone learns how to read and write, and as these skills are unavoidably required to be used to get along in the existing conditions of life, the skills are cultivated and retained. Adult education in Britain, therefore, connotes something else than literacy. It is also not used to mean technical and vocational training. Then what is it? There are both men and women who want to continue their studies without any vocational or commercial motive. There are others, particularly working-class people, who want to take a more active part in trade unions, cooperatives or local self-Government. There are also people to whom learning is a hobby, a joy and pleasure for its own sake. These different interests combine to form quite a sizable section of the population for whom adult education is a real necessity, and no luxury.

Origin of Adult Education in Britain

Adult education in Britain owed its origin to the Nineteenth Century Industrial Revolution. The so-called Mechanics' Institutes were set up in the wake of the establishment of mills, mines, factories and workshops which employed

workers in large numbers. The Mechanics' Institutes were intended to offer courses on the know-how of industries and machine operations etc. Such courses had, of course, to pay attention to the illiteracy of the working men as well.

Workers' Educational Association

A tradition of independent Worker's Education next grew alongside the Trade Union and Cooperative movements. Its aim was to make the working-class people socially and politically more conscious and effective. The founder of the Worker's Educational Association (W.E.A.), Albert Mansbridge, himself an active associate of the Cooperative movement, was deeply interested in the principles of consumer's cooperation, and general advancement of the working class. This brought him in close touch with the Trade Unionists at the formative period of the British Labour Party. Mansbridge advocated close association between the University Extension Movement and the Working Class organization. The W.E.A. was founded in 1903. The working men and women in Britain in the beginning of this century did not usually have the opportunities of full-time schooling. Their school education often terminated at the age of thirteen, sometimes even earlier at twelve. The W.E.A. was founded to offer educational facilities for the labouring men and women. The educational deficiency of the workers generally manifested itself in defective reading, and inaccuracy of expression in speech or writing.

Tutorial Classes

Tutorial classes were held with the clear and categorical objective to train them in these essential skills, and also in some other subjects of real interest. The subjects generally taught and studied in the Tutorial classes are related to the aspects of personal and social behaviour. The avowed aim of the W.E.A. is to promote education for social purposes. The courses are non-vocational, and comprise History, Economics, Politics, International Relations, Industrial Relations, Sociology, Social Philosophy, Literature, Music, Psychology, Biology, Botany, Geology or any other subject or subjects

that the member-students may choose to study, and the tutors may be competent to teach. The Tutorial classes were at first planned to continue for two years, but were later on extended to three years according to exigency. No examinations are held, and no certificates are awarded. But written exercises are often insisted upon.

Organizational Set-up

A dozen or more people in any locality may form themselves into a class if they agree on a subject for study as well as time and place for meeting. A tutor is supplied by the W.E.A. The tutor draws up a syllabus and a list of books. The syllabus is scrutinized by the member-students themselves who may like to know whether this is the kind of things they want to study. Also the academic value of the syllabus has got to be vetted by the representatives of the University. The National Library Service through the local public library supplies books and journals etc. Anybody over sixteen years is eligible for membership of the class. The Local Education Authority finances the W.E.A. classes, and receives proportionate grant from the Government. The Ministry of Education pays to the extent of 75% of the Tutor's salary, the remaining 25% and necessary incidental charges have to be found by the W.E.A. The W.E.A. has branches all over the country, which is divided into a number of W.E.A. districts for administrative convenience. Each district has a Council and an Executive with a General-Secretary and a full-time Organizing Secretary. These two officials excepted, all others are non-paid voluntary workers.

Three years, as already said, is the duration of these part-time tutorial courses. Each session comprises twenty-four weekly meetings usually held during the winter months from September to March. Each meeting lasts for two hours. A standard roughly equivalent to University Honours is aimed at.

Role of Universities

The University Tutorial classes including Workers' Education are supposed to be the most remarkable contri-

bution to adult education made by the British Universities. Very close co-operation between the Universities and the W.E.A. resulted in what is known as the Rochdale class, which started its session in 1908. Except for the brief interruptions during the two wars these extra-mural activities of Oxford, Cambridge and London in particular, continued very satisfactorily. The number of such classes sponsored by the different Universities once rose to the maximum of 844 with a total enrolment of 12,966 (1955-56).

Social Studies

During the half-a-century history of this movement "Social Studies", of all subjects, predominated the Tutorial courses from the popularity point of view. This may be regarded as an indisputable pointer to the impact that this momentous period of social change bore upon this movement and vice versa. The worker-students' own experience of the new changes—social, political and economic—is most valuable, and deeply affects the outlook of their tutors and others.

Village College

The rural districts lack in certain cultural amenities usually available in towns. The Village Colleges in England serve as Community Cultural Centres providing such amenities. Recreational activities including drama, music and dances are planned and organized. Classes for formal education for those who need it are also held. The Village College functions as a school for children in the morning and as a cultural centre for adults in the evening. Vocational groups are given training in craftwork such as carpentry, cooking, laundry, tailoring, etc. Courses on improved agricultural methods and implements are offered for the benefit of the farmers. Lessons on book-keeping, stenography and foreign languages are given by experts. The Village College at Impington in Cambridgeshire founded in 1939 is a well-known institution of this kind.

No membership fees are charged, but special services offered are usually paid for by the beneficiaries. The lecture halls and meeting-rooms are sometimes let out on moderate

rental, and fetch some revenue. There are a few paid workers. They are ably and willingly assisted by volunteers. At Impington, for example, village women work in shifts to prepare and serve meals and snacks in the attached canteen. The Education Act of 1944 authorises the County Councils to set up Community Centres and levy taxes for that purpose. The Ministry of Education also makes grants to the Village Colleges by way of supplementing the local taxes. Besides, there are endowments to provide financial support to these institutions.

Briefly speaking, the Village Colleges are planned and organized as co-operative undertakings of the people to secure for themselves such educational and cultural amenities as are usually the privileges of the townsfolk.

ADULT ILLITERACY IN THE UNITED STATES

Believe it or not, adult illiteracy is still a cognizable problem in the United States, the world's wealthiest and materially most advanced country. The number of adult illiterates in a population of nearly 180 million is sizable and significant. Three to four per cent of a population of nearly 120 million aged 14 and above are still admitted as illiterate in any language. Even this ad hoc estimate is rather on the low side, for it precludes the none too negligible section of immigrants literate in other languages but illiterate in English, which is the national language. The extent of adult illiteracy in the States became largely evident during the World War II when recruitment to the armed forces was made on the basis of performance in reading and writing upto the Fourth Grade standard in school. Nearly one million men of the 17-38 age-group were disqualified being considered functionally illiterate.

Relapse into Illiteracy

The following table indicates another important aspect of the problem, namely, wastage or relapse into illiteracy despite compulsory school attendance upto the age of 15 or so. The figures have been adopted from an official Education Circular of the USA.

<i>Years of schooling completed</i>	<i>Percentage of relapse</i>
0	80.1
1	66.6
2	42.6
3	19.2
4	4.7

This table lends support to the view that Primary Education of the standard prevalent in our country at present cannot ensure total or even near-total literacy without the aid of an effective and extensive adult literacy programme.

The above may, at best, be regarded as a bare outline of the adult illiteracy situation in the United States. It is difficult to obtain more accurate data because (a) concepts and definitions of illiteracy vary widely from state to state; (b) foreign-born people whether literate or not in any other language are often grouped with the indigenous illiterates in English. A comparative analysis reveals some identity of reasons for existence of illiteracy in the U.S.A. and India. These reasons in general are:—

- (a) Lack of facilities for adult education. Only a limited number of educational institutions provide lessons for the adults.
- (b) The number of trained adult education teachers is extremely small.
- (c) Illiterate adults often do not understand the value of education, and are rather hard to be enthused and motivated.
- (d) Natural shyness and hesitation on the part of the adults to enrol as members of the literacy classes, and thus reveal their ignorance and backwardness.

Present Position

On an approximate estimate 150,000 adults are now annually enrolled in the literacy classes in the United States. Instruction leading upto the eight-grade school standard is generally imparted by stages. Ability to pass tests on the elementary subjects entitles the adult-learner to the VIII-grade diploma awarded by the sponsoring institution. The New York and Chicago Public schools between them award over 2,000 diplomas in a year. Although there is no standard duration for the adult courses, it is usually found that the adults learn enough in four years of 100 nights of two hours each to be able to qualify for the VIII-grade exami-

nation. An adult thus requires 800 clock-hours only as against 6,000 to 7,000 hours taken by children to complete the grade. The curriculum followed in the adult literacy classes in the U.S.A. includes the Elementary School subjects such as Reading, Spelling, Writing, English Usage, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Health, etc. Some newer courses adopt the UNESCO concept, and provide wider and more varied instruction in subjects like Agriculture, Childcare, Home Industry, Nutrition, Leisure-time Occupation, etc., alongwith Reading and Writing.

Methods and Materials

The 'Whole' or the 'Global' method (otherwise known as the Sentence Method) is almost universally used in the American adult literacy classes. Much faster progress in reading is claimed when the learner studies a complete thought-unit and then proceeds to analyse it into its component parts. The Laubach system of phonetic approach through syllables or simple words, and from words to sentences has not gained much popularity evidently because English, in particular, is rather difficult to be taught by the 'Phonetic method.' The 'Visual Kinesthetic method', the 'read-write-spell contract plan' and verisimilitude technique in teaching writing are also in use. The Direct Method of teaching language is preferred to the Indirect or Translation Method. Considerable use is made of dramatization, display of pictures and blackboard sketches to make the lessons vivid and interesting. Little emphasis is placed on grammar and formal language structure during the early stages of literacy lessons.

A literacy series and similar primers written at an early reading level with special attention to a select vocabulary supplemented by flash-cards, mounted magazine-pictures and loose-leaf practice-sheets are widely used in the literacy classes. Daily news-papers, illustrated magazines of digest or news type are quite popular as supplementary materials.

Background Philosophy

"In a republic, ignorance is crime", said the celebrated American educationist, Horace Mann. In other words,

universal education is a prerequisite to democracy. One of the fundamental problems of mass education in the U.S.A. is the coming together of a polyglot people with different ethnic strains and cultural traditions. The educational system seeks to give them a common language and cultural enlightenment with a view to bringing about integration and cohesion. The system of education has to undertake a task of far greater importance than that of book-learning. Human materials extracted from diverse cultural streams had to be welded and shaped anew into the American way of life and culture.

Origin and Growth

The history of adult education in the United States dates back to the early part of the nineteenth century. It was an attempt at educating the neo-Americans numbering nearly 25 million immigrants coming from Europe. The Working Men's Association and the American Lyceum were the first two organizations set up to promote the public school movement. This movement later on developed into an adult education programme for conducting Summer Camps, establishment of Night Classes, Mechanics' Institutes, Libraries and Lecture Courses etc. The movement has not only continued to spread, but assumed new forms and significance. Professor Edward L. Thorndike of Columbia University declared on the basis of his research that the ability of the adults to learn did not decrease with age. Such assurance is indeed needed to boost the spirit of both the adult educator and the adult learner. Further researches in adult education have confirmed the relative efficacy of learning in groups. Consequently, more reliance is now-a-days placed on ground-discussion, demonstration, motion-pictures, field-trips, excursions and cooperative projects etc.

Different Agencies

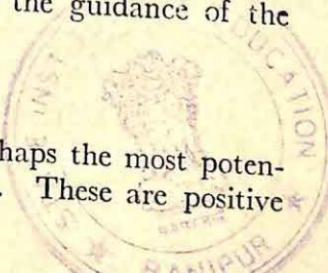
Of the several agencies or institutions now actively engaged in promoting adult education of different categories mention may be made of (i) The Public School Adult Education, (ii) University and College Extension Service, (iii) Correspondence Course, (iv) Radio and Television.

Variety of Courses and Media

Evening courses for adults in academic as well as vocational subjects, namely, carpentry, commercial art, milinery, electricity and metal-work are conducted under the auspices of Elementary Schools and High Schools. The higher educational institutions, the Colleges and the Universities squarely accept their responsibility toward the adult members of the community and discharge the same by organizing and conducting regular "Extension Service". This service includes regular lecture courses on subjects, agricultural, industrial, economic and political, social and moral. Annual enrolment under the 'Extension service' of any one university goes up to 20,000. The 'Extension Service' is confined not only to lectures and evening classes, but also provides elaborate correspondence courses for those who live too far away to attend the evening classes. Millions of people enrol in the correspondence courses each year. The sponsoring educational institutions draw up the curriculum and offer courses on a variety of subjects ranging from the study of classics to poultry-farming. Lessons are sent by post free of charge, and the student does the reading, answers questions and returns his assignment to the school. The papers are carefully read and corrected not merely by quick flourishes of the coloured pencil, and once again sent back with constructive suggestions. The students are awarded certificates on successful completion of the examinations mailed out by the school. The Great Books Foundation is another interesting feature of the Adult Education programme. Inexpensive editions of the world classics, the works of Plato, the plays of Shakespeare and other great books of everlasting value are supplied by the Foundation to the members of the Discussion-Groups. Book-Clubs are weekly attended by these members to discuss their doubts and conflicting ideas encountered in course of reading under the guidance of the trained leaders.

Radio and Television

The radio and the television are perhaps the most potential forms of mass-communication media. These are positive



factors in adult education today. Educational television is daily extending its range of services. Through numerous television broadcasting stations set up all over the country daytime and evening programmes for adult-teaching are being broadcast to meet the needs of modern mass-education. The modern man must constantly keep abreast with new facts, new skills, new ideas and values in order to adjust himself with the non-stop flow of life. The two broad phases of education now widely recognized are (i) acquisition of the basic knowledge and skills needed by one to live by, and (ii) acquisition of wisdom to use these skills properly and to realize the ultimate meaning of life, for which adult education is indispensable.

THE FUTURE HORIZON

In most countries in which adult education has appeared in recognizable form, national programmes for the education of adults have tended to take on a rather easily definable character. In England and Sweden, for example, adult education evolved essentially as national movements for the education of workers. In Denmark a network of folk schools was created for the express purpose of refashioning a national culture. In most underdeveloped countries adult education has been used primarily as a means for eliminating illiteracy. In the Soviet Union adult education has served as an instrument of state policy directed at producing loyalty to the state and developing technical competencies required by the national plans. In the sense that adult educational activities in these countries have tended to be fairly unified in their aims and institutional forms, they can be identified as national movements.

Myriad Needs and Interests

In the United States, on the other hand, the national adult educational programme has proliferated almost haphazardly in response to myriad individual needs and interests, institutional goals, and social pressures. In one sense the absence of domination and control by a single agency, clientele, or doctrine has been a strength. Because of this very freedom and diversification, adult education has penetrated to more phases of life in America than in any other country . . . and has expressed the complexity and vitality of American life."

But in another sense the apparent formlessness of the adult educational enterprise in this country has been its major weakness. Indeed, there has been a continuing lack of agreement as to whether or not there is such a thing as an adult education movement, the counter hypothesis being that adult education in this country is and should properly be a patternless mosaic of unrelated activities.

Perhaps some of the confusion is semantic. The term "adult education" is used to convey three meanings. In its broadest meaning it describes the process by which men and women continue learning after their formal schooling is completed. In this sense it includes all forms of experience—reading, listening, travelling, and conversing—that are engaged in by mature people for the purpose of learning. In its more technical meaning, "adult education" describes a set of organized activities for mature men and women carried on by a wide variety of institutions for the accomplishment of specific educational objectives. In this sense it encompasses organized classes, study groups, lecture series, workshops, conferences, planned reading programmes, guided discussions, workshops, and correspondence courses. A third meaning combines all the processes and activities of adult education into the idea of a movement or field. In this sense "adult education" brings together into a definable social system all the individuals, institutions, and associations concerned with the education of adults and portrays them as working toward such common goals as the improvement of the methods and materials of adult learning, the extension of opportunities for adults to learn, and the advancement of the general level of our culture.

Workers' Education

In view of the dominant role that workers' education has played in the adult education movements of the European countries, it becomes especially interesting to trace its difficult struggle for growth in this country.

Workingmen had begun to combine together into local unions or "trade societies" in the last years of the eighteenth

century, and artisans in every craft had organized in the larger towns. An attempt to organize a National Trades Union had been crushed in the disastrous depression of 1837. These early labour unions had been very active in advancing the cause of public schools, public libraries, Mechanics' institutes, and lyceums. Their primary concern was the elimination of industrial abuses and the improvement of working conditions.

New Perspectives for Adult Education

Should it come to pass that education is redefined as a lifelong process rather than as a function of youthful years, then with the emergence into adulthood of the first generation of youth who have been taught how to learn rather than what to think, the role of adult education in society would begin to be transformed.

Certainly adult education would then become the largest and most significant dimension of our national educational enterprise. Almost all adults would perceive "going to school" as being a normal part of the daily pattern of living as "going to work" has been in the past, for this is what they would have been brought up to expect. In fact, going to school and going to work (even going to work as a house-wife) may come to be seen as interrelated aspects of the same process as employers and communities come to treat continuing learning and work, and continuing learning and citizenship, as two sides of the same coin. The problem of what to do about increasing leisure as the work-week becomes shorter would become meaningless, because the work-week would be redefined as the work-study week. Under these circumstances, the size of the adult student body would grow to be at least twice the size of the youth student body in numbers and probably of about equal size in volume of attendance hours.

All-pervasive Programme

The number of institutions providing opportunities for continuing learning would greatly increase, and existing educational institutions would greatly expand their programmes for adults. Every industrial firm, government agency, health

and welfare agency, and voluntary association would have to provide for the continuing learning of its employees, clients, and members as a condition of survival. Adult education would become as fixed a part of their budgets, buildings, and organizational structures as production, marketing, public relations, and administration now are. Schools and colleges would have an enrolment of part-time adult students twice the size of full-time youth students, and would have specially designed facilities and specially trained faculties to serve them.

A Special Curriculum

A special curriculum would be constructed to provide adults with a continuous, sequential, and integrated programme of lifelong learning. With youths entering into adulthood knowing how to learn, the curriculum of adult education would gradually turn from a hodgepodge of remedial activities to a positive programme of sequential development. Certainly the curriculum would provide for adults to keep up to date on major developments of new knowledge and methods in both those areas of life that concern every citizen (the generalist dimension) and those areas in which each individual makes his vocation (the specialist dimension).

Master Plan for Human Growth

An integrated adult education movement would emerge. That would help to bring a sense of unity and articulation into the field of adult education equivalent to that now existing in the field of youth education. The general characteristics of such a movement would probably be somewhat along the lines described in the preceding chapter, but its mission would be quite different under the new assumptions we are now dreaming about than it could be under the existing assumptions. Its new mission would be primarily to engage the representatives of the various institutions concerned with the education of adults in the construction of a master plan for human growth during the adult years that would enable each institution to make those contributions to an individual's development that it is singularly qualified to make, and to make these contributions in such a way that they

would build cumulatively on the contributions of all other institutions. Its primary responsibility would be to shape the adult curriculum described above and to bring the multiplicity of resource for adult learning into a harmonious effort to carry it out.

Everybody a Teacher and Learner

We would start to create "educative communities". The social scientists are amassing evidence that the most significant and lasting changes in human behaviour are achieved not by the direct instruction of individuals but by producing changes in their environment. For example, an individual is more likely to develop attitudes and skills of civic participation by living in a community in which opportunities for civic participation are rich and rewarding than by attending a series of lectures on the subject. Accordingly, the adult education of the future would be total communities. This phase of the mission of adult education would be concerned with "teaching" organizations and communities to plan ways of work that will not only get things done, but also will further the growth of persons. Doctors will not only treat illness but will "explain the way to abundant health," firemen will not only put out fires but spend a larger share of their time and energy training us to prevent fires, policemen will be more interested in helping to develop careful drivers than in giving tickets, and sales-clerks will be more concerned with helping customers make wise choices than selling whatever they can persuade a customer to buy. In a totally educative community everybody would be always partly a teacher and partly a learner; the highest social approval would be reserved for those activities and those persons concerned with improving the quality of human competence; and every decision by every organization and government agency would be evaluated in part according to its effect on the development of citizens toward increasing self-direction and enlightenment.

[Adapted from "Adult Education Movement in the United States" By Malcolm S. Knowles]

THE FAMOUS FOLK-HIGH SCHOOLS OF DENMARK

The Danish expression "Fri folkespøsning" the nearest synonym for adult education really means people's voluntary enlightenment in life. Adult education in Denmark sprang spontaneously from the people themselves, and has always been closely wedded to their social and political life. The Folk-High School is the most remarkable feature of the Danish adult education system. The rank and file of the people, mostly peasants, and of late, also town-dwelling industrial workers, have not only established these institutions, but nursed and developed them into a live and dynamic organisation.

Historical Background

The movement for the enlightenment of the common man, the adult in particular, owes its origin to certain historical necessities, of which the following deserve special mention:—

In 1788, one year preceding the outbreak of the French Revolution, came the emancipation of the Danish peasantry. The king, in collaboration with certain public-spirited Civil Servants tried to enlist the allegiance and co-operation of the peasants to counter-balance the growing power of the large estate-owners and the nobility. A series of revolutionary reforms were carried out (not without opposition from the vested interests) as a result of which the Danish peasant was freed from serfdom. He became a free citizen and owner of his own land.

The men who were responsible for the enactment of these laws were far-sighted enough to realise the importance of enlightening the common man about his new position, rights and duties. But as the Napoleonic wars supervened, nothing tangible in so far as public education was concerned, could actually be done until 1814, in which year the first Education Act (corresponding to the Elementary Education Act of 1870 in England) providing free and compulsory education for all children of 7 to 14 years, was passed.

An addendum to that Act laid down that the teachers of Elementary Schools should keep in touch with their pupils even after the age of Confirmation, i.e. 14 or 15 years, and give them continuation education, as well as acquaint them with "the duties which their riper age and changed circumstances carry with them".

But it was not until another twenty or thirty years that this clause in the Act bore any practical result in the shape of Evening Schools either in villages or in towns. The peasants themselves realised that if they were to raise themselves in life, further education would be indispensable, and a number of continuation schools were established in the country.

Bishop Grundtvig

The high tide of the movement for Folk Education came with Nicolaj Frederic Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872), an illustrious and outstanding figure in Danish history, a scholar, poet, philosopher and theologian. Early in life and as an indigent scholar Grundtvig had been to England with a Government scholarship to make research in Anglo-Saxon studies at the British Museum. He also studied at Cambridge. With a sensitive and receptive mind, he was deeply impressed by the British habit of looking upon actual life as the final test of any theory, and felt that it would be more valuable to do something toward the moral and cultural elevation of the people of his own country than translate old Anglo-Saxon manuscripts into Danish. He was also imbued with the spirit of the 19th century German Romanticism. He ardently believed that "an eager heart and a desire for

wisdom are the greatest things in the world"; he really believed that "though these things might be hidden from the learned and the prudent, they might be revealed to the simple." Grundtvig wanted to arouse intellectual curiosity rather than impart information. His conception of folk education was that it should appeal to the whole nation, both the peasants and the cultivated classes. History was to be presented as an education of human life, and poetry as a vitaliser of spiritual life. The school he conceived was to be attended by men and women, who had completed their school education, and have had some practical experience of the world. He perceived that between the ages of 18 and 20 there comes a great mental awakening. The mind becomes more alert and curious, full of the desire to discover and grasp the meaning of life. It was at this precise period that adolescents should be brought into intimate contact with the leaders, to live with them, to talk to them and discuss with them their problems and perplexities of life. The pupils should not be too numerous and teachers too few to hinder intimate personal contact. The teachers should be men or women of inspiring personality. Grundtvig laid emphasis on the importance and vitality of the 'spoken word' or the 'living word' by which he meant transmission of personality through speech. Community singing and physical exercise, talks on history, poetry and religion are all intended to conduce to the spiritual enrichment of everyday life. There should be no examination and diploma nor any technical subjects. The object was to widen the mental horizon and to stimulate aspiration. And above all, it was to strengthen national unity as a means to achieve human unity. The object was to cultivate fellowship in life rather than fellowship of power.

First Folk School

The first Folk High School was founded at Rodding in 1844 in the Northern Slesvig on the German border to serve as a bulwark to protect and preserve Danish language and culture from the aggressive infiltration of German 'Kultur'.

Denmark got her first Parliamentary Constitution in 1849. "Absolutism" was abolished and the king became a

constitutional monarch. The popular movement that culminated in the triumph of democracy was not, however a class struggle for the capture of power, but a genuine economic and spiritual movement. Naturally, the Folk-School movement conforming to the Grundtvigian ideals made further headway in the following period. But as Grundtvig was a philosopher, an idealist and visionary, a man of more practical genius was needed to translate his ideas into practice.

Christen Kold (1816-1870), son of a shoe-maker, and sent to school to become a teacher was the architect and builder of the Danish Folk School in its concrete form. Christen Kold after passing through a difficult spiritual crisis in his own life, and after facing many frustrations, founded the famous Folk School St. Ryslinge in 1850. The ideas of Grundtvig and the efforts of Christen Kold were at first looked down upon as chimerical and impracticable. But though slowly, success came and during the next ten years the movement gathered momentum. Kold himself was no scholar of distinction but a man of vivid and inspiring personality. He lived with his pupils, ate with them, dressed in their fashion, spent his evenings with them, and slept with them in the same room. Through his talks, which were always based on his personal feelings and experiences he could breathe his own spirit into his listeners. His words produced breathless silence around him.

He abjured examination of any kind, and vocational or professional education. The Folk High Schools were to impart intellectual and emotional education on the basis of practical life-experience. It was not intended that the pupils from the Folk High Schools should go out as trained artisans and workers, but go back to their work with a broader outlook.

The war with Germany in 1864 ended in disaster for Denmark. The northern part of Slevig, a considerable slice off the Jutland Peninsula was lost. The people's morale suffered a severe set-back. It was at this national crisis that the Folk School Movement once again proved its inner potentiality by strengthening and reviving the national morale.

What Denmark lost outwardly she tried to regain inwardly by setting her house in order. This has been well expressed by a Folk High School leader in the following words. "They endured the baptism of affliction."

During the period from 1864-1870 some 50 H.F.S.s were established and their attendance rose from 500 to 2,000. Although some of these institutions did not carry on for long, there was a tremendous display of energy and enthusiasm and the Folk School idea struck deep roots.

The Folk High School Movement in Denmark has always been closely linked with the rise of the peasantry, the introduction of democratic Government and a strong current of national and religious impulses.

Present Tendency

The tendency during the 19th century was to found comparatively small local Folk High Schools, whereas the present tendency is to have bigger schools with imposing buildings and amenities to which students from different parts of the country come.

In all, there are now some 50 ordinary Folk High Schools, including one at Roskilde that is predominantly attended by the Danish workers and run by the W.E.A., and one at Krogerup supported by the co-operatives, the Employers' Unions and the Trade Unions. In addition there are some special types of Folk High Schools. There are thirty-two Agricultural Schools (purely technical), five specially meant for Gymnastics, games, sports and agility: ten exclusively devoted to Domestic Science, Housewifery and Nursery Training for girls, one Fishermans' F.H.S., four or five Small-holders' Folk High Schools, one for the study of International Relations, and the International People's College at Elsinore.

The Askov F.H.S. runs a special course for training the F.H.S. teachers. Askov and Hasler are advanced Folk High Schools for most of their students are drawn from those who have already attended another F.H.S. or had some other

education after the Elementary course. The course at Askov, which is regarded as the University of Folk High Schools, is a three-year course, the students of one winter term coming again for the subsequent terms.

Summer and Winter Sessions

All the Folk High Schools privately-owned are non-profit-making Corporations. They are residential institutions, generally having two sessions, the three-months summer session for girls and five-months winter session for men. In between there may be some short special courses in some of the schools. It is only in a few Folk High Schools that the winter courses are attended by both men and women. The average age of the students is about 20.

The State makes liberal grants towards the payment of teachers' salaries, buildings and equipment, almost without any conditions. The only condition on which State recognition is accorded is that the instruction imparted should be of a general and non-technical character and that there should be no examination. The Principal is allowed absolute freedom in the matter of selection and appointment of his staff. No propaganda on the basis of Party politics is allowed. The teacher is expected to present the problems in an objective manner. He expresses his own convictions, but through free discussions, the students can express their own conclusions.

The Communist Party of Denmark started a Folk High School in Copenhagen and the Government recognises it. A Folk High School is, of course, subject to inspection by the State Youth Education Adviser, but true to the tradition of freedom of the Schools, the Adviser simply acquaints himself with its work and conditions and seldom interferes with its affairs.

An indigent student may get maintenance allowance from the State which may amount to from 25% to 75% of the total expenses, including expenses on books and pocket-money. About 60% of the students receive State aid.

Method of Instruction

Instruction in a Folk High School is theoretical except in Gymnastics, Community singing and Domestic Science. Lectures, group-discussions, study-circles and similar other give-and-take methods are followed. While instruction, according to the subject-bias of a school, centres round that particular subject, attempts are made to give as much liberal education as possible through studies in Humanities. Great importance is attached to choral singing. Classwork, or any other activity begins with a song and ends with one. Every Dane—a man or a woman, a child, or an old person—can and does participate in choral songs. This is a very common feature of the Danish social life.

Distinctive Features

In brief some of the notable characteristics of the Danish Folk High School as distinct from an ordinary Primary or Secondary School are:—

- (i) A Folk High School is residential. The teachers and the students live together, trying to develop comradeship and community living.
- (ii) Instruction imparted in a Folk High School is, in the main, non-technical and non-vocational. The main emphasis is on cultural and emotional education with a view to developing broader and more enlightened outlook on life. 'Humanities' is the core subject.
- (iii) The method of teaching is the 'personal' method through the spoken word by free exchange of views between the teachers and the students. There is no test or examination.
- (iv) Folk High School Education also emphasises the moral and spiritual values of life.

Looking at things critically it will not be far from correct to say that the Folk High Schools of today differ in some fundamentals from those visualised by Grundtvig and established by his followers about a century ago.

Critical Review

Grundtvig was very strong in his opinion that a man or a woman could benefit by the Folk High School education after he or she had attained a certain age of maturity, say 18, and acquired some practical experience of life. He deliberately left out the age group 14-18. But a very vital and vulnerable age range as this is, it may be asked, particularly in the context of the conditions of the advanced industrialised civilisation of today, whether it is advisable to ignore the group altogether or to admit them to the benefits of Folk High School education of some kind or other.

The almost exclusive emphasis on cultural and intellectual education is yet another point which deserves a critical review. It is a fact that the purely theoretical character of the course does not present sufficient attraction to the present-day youths.

The Folk High Schools have greatly helped to develop social life, but large sections of the youth of today and many farmers as well are more eager to earn money than to save it to attend a Folk High School. The demand for some kind of vocational or technical education is on the increase.

It is much more difficult today than a hundred or even fifty years ago to establish a Folk High School, and to enlist a sufficient number of students. The question of resuscitating the movement in the light of the present as well as the future needs of the community has, therefore, been engaging the attention of the Folk High School leaders of Denmark.

It has already been stated that one of the objects of the Folk High School movement in Denmark was to restore and strengthen the people's morale at a time of national crisis. That it succeeded in a large measure in achieving the objective is evident from what happened after 1864. The Folk High School movement could and did stem the tide of German influence upon Danish culture.

There is also the second concrete instance of how the Folk High Schools, by direct influence, enabled the Danish farmer to exploit to their best advantage, the situation creat-

ed by the opening of a foreign market, a result of the repeal of the English Corn Laws of 1846. The reoriented Danish farmer could fully understand the implications of the new developments in World trade consequent upon the growing industrialisation of England, and the gold rush in California and Australia. He took the chance by the forelock and by intensified productive efforts captured the grain market of Europe.

Yet again, when a slump in the corn market of Europe came about in the 'Seventies of the last century as a result of competition offered by the new corn-growing countries like U.S.A., Canada, Argentina and Siberia, the enlightened Danish farmer was shrewd enough to change the tactics. He ceased to export corn, as heretofore, and switched on to the production of butter and bacon and poultry products. Denmark now leads in the World market in respect of export of meat and milk products. Denmark monopolises one-third of the World's trade in butter and one-third in bacon. The Danish farmer produces 50% of his agricultural products for home consumption and 50% for export.

Having no mines, minerals, water-power or other sinews of industry Denmark has to depend entirely upon import of raw materials from abroad for the development of her industries. Even most of Denmark's electricity comes from the big Hydraulic Plants of Sweden and Norway. In the circumstances competition with the progressive industrial countries is out of the question. Denmark makes good this leeway notwithstanding by producing agricultural and dairy products of a higher quality. The Danish soil is not naturally of very high quality. It is by mechanisation of agriculture and intensive scientific fertilisation that the land is made to yield the maximum to hold its own in World competition. The Danish farmer going to the Folk High Schools learns to his profit the latest methods of agriculture and care of livestock. He knows how to increase the fat content of milk and also how to fatten his pigs and poultry. The young women attending these institutions learn the art of house-keeping, and in later life turn out to be efficient housewives and farmer's assistants at home and on the farm.

Cooperation

In addition to agriculture and dairy, there is the third vital factor in Danish national economy, namely, its co-operation. There are Co-operative Dairies, Co-operative Bacon factories, Co-operative Credit Societies, Consumers' Co-operatives and many other similar organisations. By and large these co-operative undertakings bestow upon the farmers and other primary producers the benefit of an assured market and thus saves them the trouble of having to market their own commodities. The Danish farmer knows his own business. The liberal education he receives at the Folk High School enables him to take intelligent interest in matters vitally concerning him and his community.

The Folk High Schools devoted to gymnastics and music provide the country with trained Youth Leaders. Specialised courses in physical training are imparted. Singing is an essential item in the programme of a Folk High School. The class begins with a song and ends with one. Almost every Dane can sing or at least participate in a chorus. Social contact with any Danish farmer, worker or artisan will reveal his polished manners, his refined taste, his sense of humour and, above all, an affable and cultured personality. It redounds to the credit of the Folk High School movement that national culture and refinement, instead of remaining confined to the "ivory tower" of aristocracy, has really percolated down to the level of common man in Denmark.

Denmark's transition from feudalism to constitutional democracy was not brought about by any violent revolution or bitter class struggle. It was more or less a peaceful and progressive movement that emancipated the Danish peasantry not only from economic and political serfdom but also from the bondage of ignorance. The Folk High School movement played a remarkable part in making the peasants politically and socially conscious. From 1860 onwards the leaders of the Folk High Schools took a significant part in the political struggle. Quite a large number of the Folk High School pupils are members of Parliament and of the Local bodies. Party politics is scrupulously eschewed, but the Folk School curriculum gives political education on objective lines.

About a third of the rural youth of Denmark has attended courses at the Folk High Schools and the Agricultural Schools during the past thirty years.

Effects of Industrialisation

It may perhaps be concluded from what has been stated above that in their Folk High Schools the Danish people have really discovered a solution for some of their social and economic problems. It is true that the Folk High Schools have played a historic role in the development of Denmark into a free, democratic and prosperous country. But it will be too absurd to make such extravagant claims. At the turn of the century and in the context of changed circumstances the Folk Schools too have undergone changes in outlook, popularity and public utility. The Folk High Schools today are not the same as they were originally conceived. To take an overall view of things, the effects of industrialism are as much evident in Denmark as in any other country. The tempo of migration from the rural districts to the urban centres continues unabated. Introduction of mechanisation in agriculture and allied trades reduces the necessity for manpower, and drives men and women townwards in search of jobs. The lure of the city life has an irresistible appeal. And although the difference in the condition of life in a city and in a modernised Danish village, having the amenities of good roads, quick transport, electricity, social and civic services is much narrower than the correspondence difference in India or any non-industrialised country, the fact remains that Copenhagen alone stands out as an inflated overgrowth, having more than one quarter of the country's whole population.

It is irrefutable that the townward drift is increasing. The Folk Schools have not been able to thwart the forces of an industrialised urban civilisation nor check the migration of the villagers to the town to such a degree as is often assumed in certain quarters. Nor do they exercise the same influence on the minds of the students as formerly.

It has been complained, and not without grounds, that

of late there has been a noticeable decline in the popularity of the Folk High Schools. The Grundtvigian theory of the efficacy of a liberal and cultural education is being regarded as less and less valuable than some practical technical training ensuring immediate economic gain. Some figures are revealing:—

Year	No. of F.H.Ss. (Incl. Smallholders' Schools and Schools for Nursery Training)	Loss or Gain	No. in Attendance	Loss or Gain
1948-49	55	Nil	7,300	1.398
1951-52	55	Nil	5,902	
1954-55	59	4	Not known	

But in spite of this decline, the Folk High Schools have not outlived their mission. There are today 200,000 ex-students of the Folk High Schools. These students and with them the bulk of the population, realise the great influence the schools have had, and still have upon the economic, social and the cultural development of Denmark. They are still the spiritual and moral backbone of national life, and, therefore, the Government is eager to facilitate the people's access to them.

THE COMMUNIST CRUSADE AGAINST ILLITERACY

The progress of mass-literacy in Soviet Russia is as astonishing as its achievements in the various fields of science and technology. The all-Russian Census of 1897 recorded a literacy percentage below 24. That among the non-slav minorities in the north and east, i.e., among the Tadzhiks, Uzbeks, Turkomenians, Kirghiz and Yakuts, etc., was even less—in some cases as appallingly low as 5%. And many of these tribes had no written language or script at all. There was no noteworthy change in the cultural level of the people during the following twenty years.

The Lenin Decree

A massive movement for wiping out illiteracy was initiated almost immediately after the outbreak of the Great October Revolution in 1917. Knowledge is the real source of power, and the masses of people could not be imbued with the spirit of communist culture without the aid of education. The great revolutionary leaders not only realised this, but one of the first things they did was to adopt a series of measures to reorganise the public education system. Even before the Civil war had been won, and the new regime firmly installed, the Soviet Government issued a decree signed by Vladimir Lenin, Chairman of the Council of Peoples' Commissars (Ministers) on December 28, 1919, in which it was stated that all the adult illiterate inhabitants of the Republic between the ages of 18 and 50 were required to learn to read and write in Russian or in their own languages. That

the order was not merely mendacious is apparent from several facts. All available personnel fit for this particular job—doctors, teachers, Government officials, educated workers and farmers, demobilised servicemen and senior students of secondary schools were engaged in the task. All these persons were paid at the rates equivalent to the teachers' salaries. As a matter of fact the services of all educated citizens were requisitioned in some way or other for this purpose.

'Likpunkts' (points for the liquidation of illiteracy) were set up at all available places—churches, schools, clubs, factories and offices, etc. These houses were commandeered if necessary, and all employed workers were enabled to attend the classes for two hours a day without any wage-cut. Legal action could be taken against anyone trying to prevent the workers from attending the classes.

A Vigorous Campaign

The movement was launched with a fanfare of propaganda and publicity. Hundreds of thousands of posters, copies of the Lenin decree, slogans and appeals were printed and circulated throughout the country. Parks, public places, house-walls, railway station platforms were plastered with pictures and posters with a view to attracting the common man's attention to the call of the nation. Special short-term training courses were organised in the regions and districts with a view to training teachers and instructors in the technique of adult-teaching.

The above preliminary measures were followed up by the foundation of a special and permanent organisation the "all-Russia Extra-ordinary Commission for the Eradication of Illiteracy" on June 19, 1920. Another public society called the "Down with Illiteracy Committee" was founded in 1923 to promote and strengthen the programme. This Committee was headed by no less a person than Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee (now called the Presidium). This special assignment of Kalinin, the President of the Republic, and active association of Lenin himself and of his wife Madame Krupskaya

with the movement undoubtedly indicate the paramount importance that the new regime attached to the question of mass-literacy.

Illiteracy Conquered

The Extraordinary Commission for the Liquidation of Illiteracy set itself the task of making the entire population literate by 1927, the tenth anniversary of the Revolution by vigorously pursuing this movement, which they called a 'cultural campaign'. Funds were provided by the local Soviets supplemented by the Central Government. The first target could not, however, be reached by 1927 as had been hoped for. But, attendance at the 'Likpunkts' exceeded one million. The number rose rapidly from year to year; two million in 1928-29, eight million in 1929-30 and eleven million in 1930-31. Over forty million persons were counted as having attained literacy as a result of these efforts during 15 years from the promulgation of the famous decree on the abolition of illiteracy. General compulsory education for all children aged 8-12 was introduced throughout Russia in 1930-32. This checked any further rise in the number of young illiterates eventually adding to the bulk of adult illiterates. The final objective seems to have been substantially attained during the Second Five-Year Plan period (1933-37), and by 1946, i.e., within thirty years the population of the U.S.S.R. may be said to have achieved wholesale literacy more or less.

Illiteracy No Mass-Problem

Illiteracy even now persists in some remote and backward parts of this far-flung country. But it has ceased to be any mass problem. The achievement of Soviet Russia in this matter may very well be regarded as phenomenal. This miracle has been performed solely by the people themselves effectively aided and inspired by the Government and the leaders, who were convinced that so long as the people remained illiterate, they were bound to remain impervious to the new culture and way of life. The problem was tackled with a firm resolve and sustained efforts. To those

hesitant and wavering spirits who are content with the wishful thinking that somehow, sometime this problem will find its own solution, the Russian example will surely be an eye-opener. Half-hearted measures are worse than nothing. What is needed today in India is full and frank admission of the urgency of the problem, and adequate provision—financial and organisational—for the purpose.

In addition to the extensive anti-illiteracy drive, adequate measures to provide further education to the neo-literate and the semi-literates were also taken specially from 1927 onwards. This was essential for preventing the newly-made literates from relapsing into illiteracy. The masses may acquire a steady habit of reading and writing only if suitable books are made available to them. Such books, in the first instance, should be written in a simple language and style on topics akin to adult interests, and printed in legible and easily readable type-faces. What was done in Russia in this regard may be recounted in brief.

Production of Literature

In the first place the difficult Arabic and other tribal scripts were replaced by a uniform alphabet devised on the basis of the Latin letters. Discrepancies in the spelling of related languages were abolished and standard simpler spellings were introduced. "The Down with Illiteracy Society" set itself to the specialised task of producing and publishing literature for mass consumption. Newspapers, books, journals, folders and posters were printed in their thousands, and distributed on a mass-scale amongst the intending readers. In one year 1936, in particular, 67 millions of pages of literature were printed in non-Russian vernaculars to cater for the semi-literates. The topics dealt with in these publications served the adult interests, and ranged from politics, popular science to fishing, trapping, etc. The study of folklore was pursued and encouraged. In the 'Thirties, language specialists made exploratory excursions over the vast country in search of raw materials and untapped natural resources. These materials were carefully examined and sifted, and used as reading materials for the newly awakened

masses of people. Old tunes, old epithets and hyperboles were adapted and applied to new themes and the new heroes. The new readers apparently relished it.

Role of Journalism

Russian journalism also played a significant role in advancing the cause of the 'cultural campaign' as they called it. Enterprising and patriotic publishers brought out special periodicals and journals regardless of financial consequences for the benefit of the new-literates. Incentives were provided to the newly-literated writers by offering them appointment as village correspondents. Contributions by the semi-literates dealing with their personal aims and experiences were readily accepted and published.

Methodology

The method adopted in teaching adults how to read and write was in the beginning that of the 'whole words'. It was later replaced by an analytical-synthetical method. Familiar words were analyzed into sounds i.e. syllables, and syllables were synthetized into words. This technique proved quicker and more effective than visual memory upon which the whole-word or sentence method is conceived. The element of logical reasoning involved in learning to spell the words as combinations of phonetical units (syllables) proves more interesting to the reader. Only a few letters similar in sound and shape and not in the alphabetical order are taught at first. Thus the learner understands how words are built up by sounds. As more and more letters are mastered more and more words are built up and learnt.

Training of the Adult Educators

Some of the important aspects of the work of adult-teaching are:

- (i) Training of the workers to combat illiteracy.
- (ii) Preparation of programmes, text-books and method of instruction etc.

- (iii) Devising ways of determining the ability and progress of the adult pupils attending the classes.
- (iv) Study of individual and group problems, and techniques of working with mixed groups.

An army of trained workers had to be recruited for carrying on the literacy campaign throughout the length and breadth of this vast country. Most of the workers in the beginning had no special pedagogical training. They were, therefore, asked to attend a refresher course in Russian and other languages and Arithmetic every year. Similar short courses were also organized for the workers who were to teach the semi-literates. The programmes for these training courses included the study of the methods of teaching Reading, Writing, Grammar, Arithmetic and Geography.

Technical and methodological guidance was given by the trained school teachers and other experts to the Literacy Campaign workers in the following manner:

- (a) Short training course.
- (b) Supervision of the teaching work of the trainees.
- (c) Conferences of the campaign workers.
- (d) Supply of guide-books to the workers.

The trained teachers and other specialists helped the adult-educators in organizing homogeneous groups of students and in assessing their special needs, problems and characteristics. They also helped in planning the lessons. Methodological notes dealing with questions relating to the actual processes of reading, writing and counting, teaching of the metric system, the method of individual and group-instruction, work with mixed groups, the use of Primers, books and newspapers, and many other things were prepared, published and exchanged. Periodical seminars were frequently organized at different places to enable the specialists and field workers to meet as often as necessary and discuss their problems.

APPENDIX I

UNIVERSITY QUESTIONS ON SOCIAL EDUCATION

‘Social Education’ has been adopted as a subject of study in the Bachelor of Teaching/Education Course by a number of Universities in India, amongst whom are the universities of Calcutta, Bombay, Punjab, Kerala, Kalyani, Gauhati and Viswa-Bharati (Santiniketan). Some random samples of the Questions on Social Education set for the final B.T./B. Ed. Examinations held by these Universities are given below. These questions broadly indicate the main trends of thinking on Social Education and provide guidelines for teaching the subject at the University level.

SOCIAL EDUCATION

I

1. Fully explain how ‘Worker’s education’ may promote industrial peace. Suggest some practical measures for advancement of education amongst the industrial workers.
2. What is meant by the Community Development Project? How does it differ from the National Extension Service Scheme? What are the salient features of the N.E.S. programme?
3. What is educational ‘Extension work’? How would you plan an extension programme to be taken up by a Secondary school?
4. What are the five main aspects of Social Education as outlined in the Government Scheme? Is there any difference in concept and approach between adult education and social education?
5. Do you consider the existing children’s primers in your language good enough for the adult beginners? If so, how, and if not why not?

6. Give a short account of some of the important indigenous folk recreational arts prevalent in your part of the country.
7. Adult franchise without adult education is a paradox. Do you agree? Suggest practical measures for the removal of mass illiteracy in India within a measurable period of time.
8. Briefly outline the scheme for Social Education now being implemented in your State. Give constructive suggestions for its improvement.

II

1. Clearly explain the basic difference between Adult Education and Social Education as regards concept and scope. What are the main features of the Social Education Programme?
2. Give a short account of the mass-education movement in China with particular reference to the role played in it by the students and youths.
3. What are the different concepts of leadership? How do community organizations throw up new leadership?
4. What do you mean by Extension Service? How can our Universities and Colleges promote education amongst the people through Extension Programmes?
5. Which method or methods would you prefer for imparting literacy lessons to adults and why? How does the method of child-teaching differ fundamentally from that of adult-teaching?
6. Give your views on the cinema as a medium of education and culture. Describe the use of filmstrip, epidiascope and tape-recorder as audio-visual aids to class-room teaching.
7. Have you ever visited any Community Development Block? Give your impressions of the constructive work being done in that Block.

III

1. What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of the "alphabet" and "sentence" methods in adult-teaching?
2. Social Education has been called the educational basis of the Community Development Programme. Discuss.

3. What is the percentage of literacy in India today? What measures would you recommend for wiping out mass-illiteracy within a measurable period of time?
4. Write short notes on the educational uses of—
 - (a) Poster; (b) Wall newspaper; (c) Film strip; and (d) Radio.
5. The masses of India may be illiterate but not uneducated. Is this statement justified in the context of India's indigenous culture and tradition?

IV

1. According to 1961 census the position of West Bengal in respect of progress of literacy has been found unsatisfactory. How do you account for such an unsatisfactory state of things? Suggest remedial measures.
2. What is Social Education? What are its main objectives? How do you distinguish between formal and functional literacy?
3. Write short notes on:
 - (i) Film as an important medium of mass-communication
 - (ii) Prevention of wastage in Adult Education
 - (iii) Educational uses of Flannelograph and Diorama
4. Discuss how recreational and cultural activities can be utilized to impart wholesome social education.
5. Write a note on "Literature for the Neo-literates", specially touching upon the following points:
 - (i) Vocabulary
 - (ii) Style and presentation
 - (iii) Subject-matter
 - (iv) Illustration
 - (v) Printing and get-up

V

1. Explain clearly the main objectives of Social Education.

How do you distinguish between adult literacy and adult education?

2. Does ability to learn diminish with age? Is there any difference between the methods for child education and adult education? Discuss.

3. Describe the social and cultural value of a country *mela*. What hygienic precautions should be adopted in the interest of public health in a big *mela*?

4. What are the special uses of the following aids in adult education?

- (a) Poster
- (b) Slides
- (c) News-bulletin
- (d) Radio

5. Prepare a brief scheme for setting up and running an adult education centre in your area with special reference to the following:

- (i) Preparatory survey
- (ii) Accommodation and equipment, etc.
- (iii) Teaching personnel
- (iv) Courses of lesson
- (v) Follow-up work.

VI

1. What are the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the Analytic and the Synthetic method in learning reading and writing.

2. Distinguish social education from adult education. Indicate how community hygiene can be taught to the villagers.

3. How can a village library contribute to the Community Development programme? What should be the essential features and functions of a village library?

4. Write short notes on the following as media of Social Education:

- (i) Jatra, (ii) Kathakata, (iii) Mela, (iv) Exhibition.

5. Draw up a detailed programme of activities for a village Community Centre.

VII

1. What are the chief aims of Social Education? Discuss their significance in present-day India.
2. In what way does adult learning differ from child learning?
3. Suggest the types of subject-matter suitable for books in a Social-Education Library. How can the Librarian of such a Library promote Social Education in its neighbourhood?
4. What contribution to Social Education is expected from the Community Development Projects and the National Service Extension Blocks? How far have these expectations been realized?
5. Answer briefly any three of the following:—
 - (a) Name the difficulties experienced by Social Workers in opening and conducting Social Education classes.
 - (b) What could Universities do to promote Social Education?
 - (c) What is the value of Posters and Projectors in Social Education?
 - (d) What are the functions of a 'Community Centre'?

VIII

1. 'The Community Project Scheme is the backbone of the Nation'. Comment upon this statement, describing the various activities of the Community Projects.
How far has the scheme been successful?
2. How is Social Education organized and financed in the City of Bombay?
3. Explain fully the characteristic differences in the mental make-up of the adult and the child.
4. What is the importance of any three of the following in Social Education?
 - (i) Mobile Libraries;

- (ii) Audio-Visual Aids;
- (iii) Recreational and Cultural Activities;
- (iv) Community Centres.

5. Answer briefly any three of the following:—

- (i) What are the special problems of Social Education in rural areas?
- (ii) Why has the term 'Social Education' replaced the term 'Adult Education'?
- (iii) What type of literature is needed for neo-literates?
- (iv) What are the activities of the Social Welfare Board?

APPENDIX II

THE PLACE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN ADULT EDUCATION

In a broad and comprehensive sense, the aim of adult education today is to help men and women to live fuller and richer lives in adjustment to their environment, to develop the best elements in their culture, and to achieve social and economic progress, which will enable them to take their rightful place in the modern world, and to live together in peace and harmony. If we accept this premise, and there is no reason why we should not, we agree to the proposition that the study of our cultural heritage constitutes an inalienable part of the adult education programme. Indeed, adult education is no longer equated with mere alphabet-learning. It transcends literacy, and stands for a continuous and all-embracing process of education for elevating man materially, intellectually, emotionally and even spiritually. Education is needed not only for the illiterate and border-line literates, but for all—irrespective of age and academic achievement.

The culture of any people at any time is no overnight performance of Alladin's magic lamp. It is the evolution and accumulation of man's achievement in various spheres of life through the ages. It is like a blazing trail relayed through the generations, gathering new lustre and momentum at every turn of history. It is the past that provides inspiration as well as lessons for our action in the living present, and our plan for the Future. Knowledge of history, in other words, our cultural heritage is, therefore, an essential part of the adult education programme.

Culture a Way of Life

To define culture precisely and categorically is yet another knotty job. To talk of culture in the abstract is like calling something good without specifying what it is good for. Etymologically the word means cultivation. But cultivation of what? Anything. It may be literature, music, dance, dress-making,

science, sanitation, traditional kitchen-culture of Indian womanhood and even taxidermy. It is variegated, kaleidoscopic and highly abstract, and yet liable to be translated into concrete and perceptible forms and dimensions. Culture is not just art, music, literature and dancing. It is deeper and broader than any of its outward manifestations. It is indeed the pattern of behaviour generally accepted by a people. The seed-bed of culture is an attitude to life, active participation in life. In arbitrarily labelling art, music, literature etc. as cultural, we deal only with the exposed peaks of a submerged continent. Culture's best expression—and the finest creation of any people—is the national character. Looked at from this angle, the place of cultural heritage in the programme for adult education is indisputable as well as indispensable. Since the beginning of human existence, change, constant change has been the story of our ever-growing civilization; but whereas in the past man could adapt to a change slowly over a long time-span, modern science and technology impels him to quick adaptation, or face disaster.

Balanced Appraisal of Culture

Revolution has supplanted evolution, a fact that imposes a special responsibility upon education in general, and adult education in particular. It is more urgently than ever that the need for understanding the physical universe and the nature of man through appreciation of literature, music and fine arts as expressions of the human spirit and imagination is being felt. It is true, man has learnt a lot about how to control nature, but has he yet learnt to control his own inner nature—his own self? This is the big question posed by the great technological revolution of our time. The answer lies in a balanced appraisal and appreciation of our cultural heritage in its proper perspective.

India, as some philosophers say, is not just a geographical entity, but a spiritual concept and tradition coming down the centuries. The main stream of our culture is one and indivisible though fed and nourished by hundreds and thousands of tributaries each with its separate identity and characteristic feature. The degree of homogeneity outshines elemental heterogeneity. The underlying fundamental unity of Indian culture is to be studied, understood and appreciated. This is necessary for forging national integration, otherwise imperilled by the visible differences of caste, language or communal affiliations. Our cultural heritage merits adequate attention in the programme for adult education.

One must not overlook the basic fact that the Indian mas-

ses though largely illiterate are neither ignorant, nor do they lack in intelligence. This is an advantage that the adult education planner may fully exploit.

Two Monumental Works of Human Genius

Our past history provides ample evidence of how our national culture percolated among the masses through the time-old mass-media such as the immortal classics presented in a variety of forms, namely, dance, drama, songs, recitals, portraits, melas and festive congregations etc. The two epics of Indian poetry are in fact the corner-stone of India's mass culture. Literature, History, Religion, Sociology, Politics, Statecraft and even Logistics—(almost every conceivable contribution of human thought)—have been presented on a canvas of extraordinary vastness and variety. India's popular culture has been epitomised in these two monumental works of human genius.

The Indian people till to-day draw their cultural sustenance from these perennial sources, and shall do so for all time to come. The pattern and fabric of the common man's everyday life is woven and fashioned after this age-old tradition. Even in naming the new baby, for example, he adopts those of the heroes and heroines of old. In his work and prayer, in his habits and manners, in his beliefs and misgivings and even in his life and death he follows the traditional tenets that have been pervading throughout the length and breadth of this sub-continent from time immemorial. Under the surface-deep superficialities of language and speech, food and dress-habits, skin-complexion and physical constitution runs an abiding stream of cultural unity and integrity. It is for the wise and discerning people to take note of this, and work for national unity and cohesion. The Social Education Programme has got a significant role to play. The programme of Social Education includes within its ambit the whole gamut of culture from elementary alphabet-literacy to high-level sophistry.

Importance of Indigenous Folk Culture

The time-old and indigenous forms of culture otherwise called folk-culture should invariably constitute a part of the Social Education programme. The Scheme adopted by the Government of West Bengal as early as 1948 gave due importance to this aspect of Social Education. Reorientation and revival of Yatra, Kavigan, Tarja, Kirtan, Gambhira and other forms of folk recreation are encouraged through financial assistance and technical guidance.

Every Adult Education Centre set up either under Govern-

ment ægis, or under voluntary auspices is expected to organize its programme through the medium of educative recreations. Such activities stand to serve two-fold purposes, namely, making the centre an attractive meeting place for the community, and generating will and interest on the part of the adult scholars to take to formal education. The scheme also provides for the training of the artistes at the specially set-up centres with Government financial assistance. The culture of the common folk as distinct from the culture of the court is perennial and spontaneous—a natural growth from the soil as it were, that sustains itself through the ages on its own strength. That is why our folk literature, music, dance and drama etc. still endure, while many an exotic has withered and vanished, though nurtured and patronized by the elite. Our country is renowned as a land of poets, writers, musicians and artistes. For our national revival and struggle for national freedom, we are heavily indebted to the popular cultural movements. The adult education programme should, therefore, draw on the rich cultural traditions of the people. Apart from the conventional forms of adult education such as class-room lesson, lecture, discussion and demonstration etc. the programme should lay adequate emphasis upon cultural activities—solo as well as group or community-wise. There is indeed no quarrel between the old and traditional culture, and the neo-culture, which is the offspring of modern science and technology. The two should rather go together.

Cultural Education of Sociological Need

Cultural education for the adults is based on at least two well-known sociological needs. In the first place, the impact of rapid automation and industrialization upon our day-to-day life is bound to have a powerful dehumanizing repercussion in so far as the worker is concerned, for he tends to be regarded as nothing more than a functional unit in the process of production. Secondly, the processes of industrial manufacture tend to destroy the traditional arts. Aesthetic education, art appreciation and artistic production are among the ways in which man reasserts his humanity. Cultural education for adults will, thus, generally enable man to attain a better quality of life. The adult education programme should be designed to keep alive the accepted forms of artistic expression—music, drama, art and crafts, and all the rest in the process of transformation from rural to technological civilization. The programme should be designed to give the adults an opportunity to create something beautiful themselves in music, literature, art and craft. This will counteract the influence of the sordid and debased art forms with which people are obsessed in their everyday life.

APPENDIX III

WORLD-LITERACY AND INDIA

Name of Country	Census year	Percentage of adult literacy	Name of State	Percentage of literacy: 1961 Census		
				Men	Women	Total
1. World	1950	56.0	India	34.4	12.9	24.0
2. Africa	1950	17.5	1. Andhra	30.2	12.0	21.2
3. America	1950	80.0	2. Assam	37.3	16.0	27.4
4. Asia	1950	37.5	3. Bihar	29.8	6.9	18.4
5. Europe	1950	92.0	4. Gujarat	41.1	19.1	30.5
6. U.S.S.R.	1950	92.0	5. Kerala	55.0	38.9	46.8
7. England	1950	100.0	6. Madhya Pradesh	27.0	6.7	17.1
8. U.S.A.	1950	96.8	7. Madras	44.5	18.2	31.4
9. France	1946	96.7	8. Maharashtra	42.0	16.8	29.8
10. Italy	1951	85.6	9. Mysore	36.1	14.2	25.4
11. Spain	1950	82.7	10. Orissa	34.7	8.6	21.7
12. Japan	1950	98.0	11. Punjab	33.0	14.1	24.2
13. Ceylon	1950	63.0	12. Rajasthan	23.7	5.8	15.2
14. India	1961	24.0	13. Uttar Pradesh	27.3	7.0	17.6
			14. West Bengal	40.1	17.0	29.3



APPENDIX IV

BOOKS AND JOURNALS CONSULTED

1. *About Education*, C.E.M. JOAD (Faber & Faber Ltd.).
2. *India Shall be Literate*, Frank. C. Laubach (National Christian Council, Nagpur).
3. *Adult Education for Democracy*, Harold C. Shearman (Workers' Educational Association, London).
4. *Adult Education for a New Democracy*, Dev Inder Lall (S. Chand & Co. Delhi).
5. *Total Education*, M. L. Jacks (Kagan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.).
6. *Fundamental Education*, UNESCO, Paris.
7. *The Adult Education Movement in the United States*, Malcolm S. Knowles.
8. *Bulletins of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture*, Calcutta.
9. *Quarterly Bulletins of Fundamental Education*, UNESCO, 19, Avenue Kleber, Paris.
10. *Education Abstracts*, UNESCO, 19, Avenue Kleber, Paris.
11. *Adult Education in the Struggle for Peace*, G. E. C. Gad, Copenhagen.
12. *Never Too Late*, N. Roy. (Orient Book Coy., Calcutta).
13. *Teachers' Handbook of Social Education*, Ministry of Education, Government of India.
14. *Manual on Social Education*, Community Projects Administration, Government of India.
15. *Adult Education: University Extramural Teaching in England and Wales*, J. P. Bulkeley, Government of India.
16. *Report of the Committee on Adult Education*, Government of Bengal, 1941.

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